

GOD DID NOT FORGET

God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and the livestock that were with him in the ark, and He sent a wind over the earth, and the waters receded. Now the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens had been closed, and the rain had stopped falling from the sky. The water receded steadily from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the water had gone down, and on the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

After forty days Noah opened the window he had made in the ark and sent out a raven, and it kept flying back and forth until the water had dried up from the earth. Then he sent out a dove to see if the water had receded from the surface of the ground. But the dove could find no place to set its feet because there was water over all the surface of the earth; so it returned to Noah in the ark. He reached out his hand and took the dove and brought it back to himself in the ark.

Noah waited seven more days and again sent out the dove from the ark. When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf! Then Noah knew that the water had

receded from the earth. He waited seven more days and sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him.

By the first day of the first month of Noah's six hundred and first year, the water had dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry.

By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was completely dry. Then God said to Noah, "Come out of the ark," God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth."

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him:

"I now establish My covenant, and this is the sign of the covenant I am making between Me and you, and your descendants and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set My rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth."

"Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember My covenant. Never

again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life.
Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it
and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all
living creatures of every kind on the earth.”

Gen. 8:1-9:16



God remembers you (Acts 10:4 NCV). Throughout the Bible we discover how God sent angels to those who chose to share in His everlasting covenant. Are not angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation (Heb. 1:14)?

So know when that angel spoke to Cornelius his words were also meant to be heard and received by us: God has heard your prayers and your gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before Him (NKJV).

There will be things you will read like this in Hebrews: Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. But land that produces thorns and thistles is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned.

However, even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are confident of better things in your case – things that accompany salvation (Heb. 6:7-9). This is why it is so important for us to pay careful attention to what we've heard, so that we don't drift away. For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation (Heb. 2:1-3)? God's Word says:

“Son of man, when a land sins against Me by persistent unfaithfulness, I will stretch out My hand against it. Even if these three – Noah, Daniel and Job – were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness.”

Ezek. 14:12-14 NKJV



Yes, we must listen very carefully to the truths we have heard. God has shown us that these messages are true by signs and wonders and various miracles and by giving special abilities from Holy Spirit to those who believe; yes, God has assigned gifts to each of us (Heb. 1-4 TLB).

Which is one purpose for the composition of these booklets, to share God's Word, for without the Truth how could we escape from what causes troubled waters – error and confusion and deception?

A second purpose, as knowledge and understanding of God and His Word is gained we place ourselves in a new position, one of “openness” to receive everything our heavenly Father desires to bestow.

And yes there is a third purpose, just as we have naturally accumulated a great quantity of dead weight from following the ways of the world, we will also just naturally have those things the enemy meant to torment fall from our lives as we accept and apply God's Word of Truth.



Paul wrote: I too am convinced that you are full of the goodness Holy Spirit bestows. That God is working so you too would be made complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another. God has given us grace to be ministers of Christ Jesus, Who anoints us for serving the priestly duty of proclaiming the Gospel of God, so that

those who are not familiar with God's Message, might become an offering acceptable to Him, sanctified by the Spirit of Truth.

I pray the Church would adopt the same heart-felt desire as Paul, who said: Therefore, I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done – by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:14-19).



God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with Holy Spirit and power, and He went about doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with Him (Acts 10:38). The Lord said:

“If you love Me, you will obey what I command. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in Me will do what I have been doing. They will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in My name, so the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask Me for anything in My name, and I will do it.”

John 14:12-15

I pray that every good gift from God may be yours. God's Word says:

"I came down from heaven not do My will, but to do the will of Him Who sent Me. And this is the will of Him Who sent Me, that I shall lose none of all that He has given Me, but raise them up at the last day. For My Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day."

John 6:38-40

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Though we have not seen Christ, we still love Him. Though we can't see Him now, we believe in Him. We are filled with a wonderful and heavenly joy that cannot be explained, for the goal of our faith, and we are reaching that goal - our salvation.

The prophets studied carefully and tried to learn about this salvation. They spoke about the grace that was coming to us. The Spirit of Christ was in those prophets, and the Spirit was telling them about the sufferings that would happen to Christ and about the glory that would come after those sufferings.

The prophets tried to learn about what the Spirit was showing them – when it would happen and what the world would be like at that time. It was made clear to them that their service was not for themselves; instead, they were serving us when they told about the things we have now heard.



We hear about these things from those who have told us the Good News, with the help of Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even the angels would like very much to know more about these things we've been told

(1 Peter 1:8-12 ERV). For though they heard these words how could they possibly be spoken of their Beloved Lord:

“The Sovereign Lord has opened my ears, and I have not been rebellious; I have not drawn back. I offered My back to those who beat Me, My cheeks to those who pulled out My beard; I did not hide My face from mocking and spitting.”

“Because the Sovereign Lord helps Me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set My face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame. He Who vindicates Me is near.”

“Who then will bring charges against Me? Let us face each other! Who is My accuser? Let them confront Me! It is the Sovereign Lord Who helps Me. Who will condemn Me? They will all wear out like a garment; the moths will eat them up.”

Isa. 50:5-9



Let us not be as those who shrink back and are destroyed, but like those who believe and are saved. Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible (Heb. 10:39-11:3).

And though we pray to God and call Him Father, He will judge everyone the same way – by what they do. So while you are visiting here on earth, you should live with respect for God. In the past you

know the way you were living was useless. It was a life you learned from those who lived before you. But, you were saved from that way of living.

You were bought, but not with things that ruin like gold or silver. You were bought with the precious blood of Christ's death. He was a pure and perfect sacrificial Lamb. Christ was chosen before the world was made, but He was shown to the world in these last times for you. You believe in God through Jesus. God is the One Who raised Christ from death and gave honor to Him. So your faith and your hope can rest in God (1 Peter 1:17-21 ERV).



We can be assured by taking steps to gain knowledge, God will be found and the fear of the Lord understood (Prov. 2:5). The fear of the Lord is a fountain of Life (Prov. 14:27), and those who thirst for knowledge and truth and understanding can drink without cost (Rev. 21:6).

Who can imagine the breathtaking recovery Life makes, sovereign Life (Rom. 5:17a MESSAGE) that gives Light to all mankind. This Life is the Light that shines through the darkness (of fear, depression, anger,

hatred, codependence, addiction...) – and the darkness can never extinguish it. Jesus Christ is the true Light, and in Him is Life eternal (John 1:4-8 TLB).

But sadly, what the darkness can extinguish is our hope and our ability to receive what God wants to bestow.



Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has great mercy, and because of His mercy He gave us a new life. This new life brings us a living hope through Jesus Christ's resurrection from death. Now we wait to receive the blessings God has for His children. These blessings are kept for us in heaven. They cannot be ruined or be destroyed or lose their beauty.

God's power protects us through our faith, and it keeps us safe until our salvation comes. That salvation is ready to be given to us at the end of time. I know the thought of that is exciting, even if we must suffer through different kinds of troubles for a short time now.

These troubles test our faith and prove it is pure. And such faith is worth more than mere gold. Gold can be proved to be pure by fire, but

gold will ruin. When our faith is proven to be pure, the result will be praise and glory and honor for eternity when Jesus Christ returns.



So prepare your minds for service. With complete self-control put all your hope in the grace that will be yours when the Lord comes. In the past you did not have the understanding you now have, so you did the evil things you wanted to do.

But now, you are a child of God, so you should obey Him and not live the way you did before. Be holy, wholly committed to the Lord, in everything you do. Just as Jesus is holy, and proved His wholly commitment to the Father. God is holy, and He is the One who chose you.

Know we make ourselves pure by accepting, applying and following God's Word of Truth. This new life did not come from something that dies. It came from something that cannot die. We are born again through God's Life-giving Message that lasts forever (1 Peter. 1:3-7,13-23 ERV).



And no matter how many times God's Word is read revelation is bestowed. When I first started to gain knowledge of Jesus, these words from Jeremiah seemed to jump off the page to assure me God has always been present in my life:

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you.”

Several years later the second portion of this verse spoke to my heart, though it took time for me to humble myself and embrace God's Word, I have come to know the Lord was and had been and always would be embracing me:

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
Before you were born I set you apart.”



Truth has a way of piercing a heart so God's loving-kindness can be known. Melancholy may also pierce our heart with sadness not only for time wasted, but for those whose pride is so mountainous God's Word, His Son, is denied.

So I pray and write about Jesus that eyes may be opened to the great value of this gift of time so the most remarkable experience can occur,

BUT GOD!

For through His Word Love captivates a heart, as mine was when I recognized the voice of Truth was speaking about me.

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
Before you were born I set you apart;
I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

Jer. 1:5



For years I had no idea what this meant for me personally. For surely, like every piece of Scripture, there is great meaning within the content (body, heart, substance, essence) for everyone.

And, if everyone would make the most important investment – time – they too would discover how content (comforting, joyful, calming, delightful) knowing God’s Word, Christ Jesus, can truly be.

FYI: the website Christian Truth Center shares the 5 major roles of a prophet:

1. To pull down
2. To destroy
3. To throw down
4. To build and
5. To plant

<https://www.christiantruthcenter.com/role-of-a-prophet/>

This is exactly the reason, these many years later, that I have written and share these booklets so the Word of Truth would be planted in your soul, and as a result you would be clothed with Jesus (Rom. 13:14).

1. For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to **pull down** and demolish strongholds. We pull down and demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ, so our obedience can be made complete (2 Cor. 10:3-6)

2. The thief comes only to steal and kill and **destroy**; Jesus has come that we may truly live, and have life to the full (John 10:10). But there are many people who sneer at anything they can't understand and by doing whatever they feel like doing – living by animal instinct only – they participate in their own destruction (Jude 10 Message).

3. We have erected high walls to protect ourselves, but God will throw them down to the ground, even to the dust (Isa. 25:12) so we can be transparent and vulnerable in a genuine relationship with Him. The Lord rose up to face the enemy so we too could **throw down** temptation and sin, and be saved from the wicked one with His sword (Ps. 17:13). The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God (Eph. 6:17).

4. Now I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace, which is able **to build you up**, and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified by Truth (Acts 20:32 ASV). That you may prosper in every way and that your body may keep well, even as your soul keeps well and prospers (3 John 2 AMP).

5. Knowing that God desires to put His Word in your mouth, and cover you with the shadow of His hand, in order to plant the skies anew, lay the foundations of the earth anew, and say to Zion: You are My people (Isa. 51:16 CJB).

So wake up! Wake up! Put on the strength of the Lord's power. The ransomed of the Lord will return and come to Zion with singing, crowned with unending joy. Joy and gladness will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee. For God's Word says:

“I am the One Who comforts you.

Who are you that you should fear man who dies,
or a son of man who is given up like grass?”

“You have forgotten the Lord, your Maker,

Who stretched out the heavens,
and laid the foundations of the earth.

You are in constant dread all day long
because of the fury of the oppressor,
who has set himself to destroy.”

“But where is the fury of the oppressor?

The prisoners are soon to be set free.

They will not die and go to the Pit
and their food will not be lacking
For I am the Lord your God
Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar
Yahweh of Hosts is My name.”

“I am the true bread that came down from heaven.
Anyone who eats this bread will not die
but live forever.”

Isa. 51:9-15 ASB, John 6:58



Of course, God is concerned with our spiritual welfare, but His concern doesn't stop there, because His Word is also meant for the well-being of our lives right now, right here on earth. God's Word gives us insight into what has occurred on earth since time began, but the content (scope, intent, Message) has always pointed us to Jesus.

On the website “Forward Ministries,” I found this article: Jesus Fulfilled Over 300 Prophecies, Mathematically, Proving That He Is The Messiah!

There are over 300 prophecies that point directly to the Messiah. Let's start with eight and the odds of Jesus fulfilling just these eight.

1. **The time of His birth (see Daniel 8 & 9 Timeline)**
2. **He would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)**
3. **He would be born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14)**
4. **He would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12)**
5. **He would be mocked (Ps. 22:7,8)**
6. **He would be crucified (John 3:14)**
7. **He would be pierced (Ps. 22:16)**
8. **He would die with the wicked, but He would be buried with the rich (Isa. 53:9)**

By multiplying all the estimates of the fulfillment of each prophecy together, (1 in $2.8 \times 10^5 \times 10^3 \times 10^2 \times 10^3 \times 10^5 \times 10^3 \times 10^4$). This gives 1 in 2.8×10^{28} , where 28 means that we have 28 ciphers following 2.8! Let us simplify and reduce the number by calling it 1 in 1028. Written out this number is 1 with 28 zeroes – 1 in

10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000!

The odds of fulfillment and their explanation was calculated by Dr. Don Stoner on his website "Science Speaks." The 365 prophecies fulfilled by Jesus are listed on the following website:

<https://www.clintbyars.com/blog/2020/7/20/jesus-fulfilled-over-300-prophecies>



Talk about amazing! But amazing is what God accomplishes. Currently, there are approximately 8 billion people living on the earth, and God's Word would offer every unique individual personal meaning.

We can't be Mary and give birth to Christ; but, we can be impregnated with God's Word and give birth to the purpose (hope, aspiration, intention, plan) God has designed specifically for us just as He did for the mother of Jesus.

We can't watch Jesus grow to manhood as Mary did, but we can experience God's Word growing within us. The Truth reveals we have all been steeped in sin at birth, but unlike the man Jesus healed who was born blind, sin is the reason we are made spiritually blind from birth.



We can't know what Mary thought or felt as she watched the life of her precious Son unfold. We can't possibly know the plan God would like to unfold before our eyes because we simply can't think or ask or even imagine how powerful God's work within us, how immeasurably more He can accomplish if to Him be all glory given (Eph. 3:20).

But we can do as Mary did and treasure up all the things God's Word reveals to us and ponder them in our heart (Luke 2:19).

Sin causes us to seek glory (accolade, praise, honor, credit) for ourselves. As a result, in our proud stances the following two mindsets - Legalistic and Religious - prevent us from following Mary's advice: Do whatever He tells you (John 2:5).



A legalistic point of view is one that professes a right standing with God because of good works. The problem with this outlook God has given us the freedom to think and feel and believe anyway we want too. I can tell you the many valid reasons I had for adopting protective

and defensive measures that I've come to discover actually work against us.

If we consider the story of that man who was born blind, according to his tradition there was nothing he could have done to be considered right with God because blindness was attributed to being sinful. When asked how he regained sight, his testimony only sparked anger and indignation within those who claimed to know God.

God's Word speaks to each individual personally. Jesus had heard that man was thrown out because his testimony was deemed non-credible. So Jesus found him and asked:

“Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

The man asked: Who is He, sir? Tell me so that I may believe in Him (John 9:34-36). Who is the Son of Man? This prophecy of Jesus was recorded in Isa. 29:18-20: In that day the deaf will hear the words of the scroll, and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see.

Once more the humble will rejoice in the Lord. The needy will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. The ruthless will vanish, the mockers will disappear, and all who have an eye for evil will be cut down.

That blind man gave his testimony: Now that is remarkable! You don't know where He comes from, yet He opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does His will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing (John 9:30-33).



When we allow God's Word to work in us, we too can experience Jesus opening our eyes, turning us from darkness (uncertainty, skepticism, misgiving, anxiety, disbelief..) to Light (illumination, clarification, enlightenment, edification, disentanglement..).

Turning us from the power of Satan to God so we can receive forgiveness for the sin we've been steeped in since birth, and a place among those who are justified and sanctified by faith in the Son of Man (Acts 26:18).

God's Word will answer the question everyone asks: Who is the Son of Man? God's Word will open our ears so the Lord's voice can be heard:

“In fact, the Son of Man is the One speaking with you!”

There was nothing ordinary about that blind man. Though he could feel the warmth of the sun's rays he could not see the magnificent beauty of its dawning or its setting. But one extraordinary day arrived when he not only saw the sun shining in all its glory, but he experienced the glorious warmth of the Son of God's loving kindness fill his heart.



Now about that religious spirit, Diane Roth wrote: A religious spirit would be enjoying a church service. But, I wasn't born yesterday. I know that there are more definitions of the word "religious" than the one I just offered. I remember reading a book in college "How to Be a Christian without Being Religious." It was clear the author equated being religious with doing things in order to curry favor with God. Christians don't need to do things to curry favor with God because Jesus has always done everything. We don't need to be religious.

I realize there are other issues with the word “religious,” some of them having to do with people who claim to be religious. There are the people who go to church on Sunday morning, and then go to eat and don’t tip their server.

They are the people who go to church on Sunday morning and work hard to keep other people out of their church, or out of their neighborhood. So the word “religious” has come to mean “closed-minded, bigoted, hateful.”

Or, it has come to mean someone who outwardly practices, but whose heart is not in it. It’s somewhat understandable that some people have come to prefer the word “spiritual.” It may seem a kinder, gentler word.

(However, it may not be. I have been told once or twice that I am “not spiritual enough.” You can beat another person up with any word, if you want to. Sometimes “spiritual” people can be mean, too)!

This is what James says: Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this – to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world (James 1:27).



Sadly, we all function in some way in each of these viewpoints. What's even sadder we bring our unique perspectives with us, and are assured we are or have heard from God. I know I would have been found guilty of doing this. And, unfortunately it prevents us from placing our complete trust in God alone.

Paul wrote: I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. The Message Bible translates this verse, Phil. 3:12, like this: I don't mean that I am exactly what God wants me to be. I have not yet reached that goal. But, I continue trying to reach it and make it mine. That's what Christ Jesus wants me to do. It is the reason He made me His!

Even without adequate understanding of God's Word, with faith in Jesus we are encouraged by this Scripture to press on, and to continue to work out our salvation (Phil. 2:12).

But what verse 13 of Phil. 3 can prove difficult to do: Though it's not so hard to realize we too have a long way to go before we come face-to-

face with Perfection, Paul said – This one thing I do – I forget what is in the past.

How difficult it can be to put guilt and shame, unforgiveness and regret behind us, but what's impossible for us to do – overcome those tendencies and character deficits that codependency, emotional trauma, people-pleasing, narcissism, pride, fear...have produced without knowledge.

And, even with such knowledge, without truly knowing God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – we may experience a change of mind but not a change of heart.



A heart wants what it wants, and will curse anyone even God when its purpose and desire is not achieved. Ironically, when a heart controls our thoughts and feelings the curse is ours alone to bear. These are words the Lord has spoken:

“Hear and pay attention! Do not be arrogant! Today I set before you, life and prosperity – death and destruction – blessings and curses – chose Life so that you and your

children may live. That you may grow to love the Lord, by listening to His voice and holding fast to Him. For the Lord is your life!”

“Speak words that give glory to the Lord instead of trusting in deceptive words that are worthless before He brings thick darkness. If there is a change of heart in this land where pride and fear and sin hold people captive, if you humble yourself and repent and turn from your wicked ways I will hear from heaven and will forgive your sin and will heal your land.”

“If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly, if you do not oppress or shed innocent blood, if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, then you will live in the land of your conquerors. When you commune with Me and seek My face. When you acknowledge you have sinned, you have done wrong, you have acted wickedly.”

“I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Whoever humbles themselves like a child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.”

Jer. 13:15-17, Deut. 30:15-20, Jer. 7:4-8, 1 Kings 8:47, 2 Chron. 7:14, Matt. 18:2-4



Jeremiah wrote: Give glory to the Lord your God before your feet stumble on the darkening hills. You hope for light, but the Lord will turn it to thick darkness and change it to deep gloom.

But, if you do not listen, I will weep in secret because of your pride. My eyes will weep bitterly, overflowing with tears because the Lord’s flock will be taken captive (Jer. 13:15-17).

How many times have we found ourselves overflowing with tears even though our intentions were meant for good? Codependence develops in love-deficient relationships where internal brokenness exists.

We struggle with codependence (often unknowingly as was my experience), when we look to other people to fill our need for love, acceptance or significance, rather than looking to God.

Codependent relationships develop patterns where God is given a back seat while individuals use one another to meet their own emotional needs.

These patterns often invoke denial and enablement of sin, conditional love and affection, weak boundaries and a sacrifice of personal identity to maintain the relationship. An “emotionally weakened” person needs to be connected to someone who appears “emotionally strong.”

However, the caregiving “strong” person is actually weakened by their need to be needed. God designed us to live in relationships and experience Him through them.

But, only God can satisfy our needs for love and significance. He calls us to give our hearts to Him fully, worshipping Him alone. When satisfied with His perfect love, then we can love one another like God loves us – selflessly and honestly.

Information taken from the website “Regeneration.”

<https://www.regenerationrecovery.org/struggles/codependency>



Our struggles with the complexities and significance of codependency will be as varied as is our individuality. Though the list of issues that oppose our good intentions are extensive, we can trust God and His Word and Holy Spirit are working so change can be experienced – in our soul. Here are a few tendencies that develop when our faith and hope and trust is not placed as securely in God as we've placed it in ourselves and others:

- Lack of boundaries
- Low self-esteem
- Fear of man, rejection and abandonment
- Apologizing
- Accepting blame
- Avoiding conflicts
- Wearing not just a number of hats but masks
- Ignoring personal needs
- Putting others before your own needs
- Anticipating and reacting to someone else's needs, which may be perceived accurately or not
- A loss of your sense of self
- A need to control – making decisions for others or managing them

- Doing things that make you feel uncomfortable to be pleasing
- Taking on too much
- Basing your mood on how someone else feels
- Resentment for not receiving appreciation for what you do



But God, He has an individual plan and purpose for each and every person. My prayer is God's Word, His Wisdom would be known so all He has for us would be received, and all glory given unto Him.

"I am Lady Wisdom, and I live next to Sanity, Knowledge and

Discretion. The Fear-of-God means hating Evil, whose ways I hate with a passion – pride and arrogance and crooked talk."

"Good counsel and common sense are My characteristics; I am both insight and the virtue to live it out. With My help, leaders rule, and lawmakers legislate fairly; with My help, governors govern, along with all in legitimate authority."

“I love those who love Me, those who look for Me will find Me. Wealth and glory accompany Me – also substantial honor and a good name. My benefits are worth more than a big salary, even a very big salary; the returns on Me exceed any imaginable bonus.”

“You can find Me on Righteous Road – that’s where I walk – at the intersection of Justice Avenue - handing out life to those who love Me, filling their arms with life – armloads of life!”

Prov. 8:12-21 Message



Knowledge, Truth and Wisdom, meant to be personal and persuasive and pervasive, are unearthed as we dig into the depths of God’s Word. And though we walk in the midst of trouble, God preserves our life, with His right hand He saves us. The Lord will fulfill His purpose for us! The love of the Lord endures forever – He will not abandon the works of His hands (Ps. 138:7-8).

Deep calls to deep in the roar of Your waterfalls, O Lord; all Your waves and breakers have swept over me (Ps. 42:7-7). Everyone will

certainly face adversity. David wrote: You know my folly, O God, my guilt is not hidden from You.

Save me for the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in the miry depths, where there is no foothold. I have come into the deep waters; the floods engulf me. I am worn out calling for help; my throat is parched. My eyes fail, looking for my God. Those who hate me without reason outnumber the hairs on of my head (Ps. 69:1-5).

The following information was taken from the website Institute in Basic Life Principles: Difficulties are a means through which God works to accomplish His will in our lives: to shape us so that we reflect the character of Christ. On the basis of this purpose, all adversity “works together” for our good and God’s glory.

Adversity gets our attention

When adversity comes, we are forced to face problems and pressures that are too big for us to resolve. In this way, God gets our attention. We can’t continue to pursue our goals, tasks, and relationships in the same manner. We have to stop and evaluate our situation, ask God for wisdom, obey His Word, and trust Him to bring the help we need.

Adversity reminds us of our weaknesses

As we accept our unchangeable features and embrace God's purposes for our difficulties, we will experience the power of Christ in our lives. We can trust God to care for us and to provide all that we need.

The Apostle Paul knew what it meant to live with adversity that would not go away. He learned to see the good that God intended to bring to his life through it and to rejoice in God's design. He wrote: To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was give me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.

For this thing I besought the Lord three times, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness.

Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong (2 Cor. 12:7-10).

Adversity motivates us to cry out to God

God responds to the cry of His children when we suffer. The righteous cry, and the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles (Ps. 34:17).

- We are to cry out to God: I cried out to the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill (Ps. 3:4)
- We can cry out to God for mercy: Be merciful to me, O Lord, for I cry to You daily (Ps. 86:3)
- We are to cry out to God in humility: He forgets not the cry of the humble (Ps. 9:12)
- We are to cry out to God with a pure heart: If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me (Ps. 66:18)

Adversity is an assurance of God's fatherly love and care

Wise discipline brings a child to maturity. Just as a loving father helps his children learn and grow through the discipline he carries out in their lives, so God uses adversity to help us grow in holiness (Wholeness) and become more like Him. When we persevere through hardship, we have proof that we are God's children.

Adversity motivates us to fear the Lord

Adversity reminds us that God is present, and we are accountable to Him for our every thought, word and action. God's Word reveals the fear of the Lord is the key of life, wisdom and lasting achievement. If we lose our awareness of God and begin to think and act as if He does not exist He often allows painful reminders of our need for Him.

Adversity strengthens our hatred toward sin

The pain of adversity helps us recognize the deception of sin. Our hatred of evil will increase when we realize how sin keeps us from living in a way that honors God, and how it damages our lives and the lives of those we love. If we could only perceive the final cost of our sin, we would shrink from committing it. Therefore, in His mercy God exposes secret sin *so we can enjoy peace of mind and heart*. However, He does allow sin's devastating consequences to be known.

Adversity is a call for self-examination

The discipline of the Lord is a part of the life of every Christian, and adversity should motivate us to examine our lives and discern if we are disobeying God's Word in any area. God's Word should be our guide in self-examination. Many cause-and-effect sequences are recorded in Scripture for our instruction and warning. When we experience specific difficulties in our lives, we should discern if they are a consequence of sin.

Adversity exposes pride

The sin of pride is the source of many difficulties as the following Scriptures point out:

- Only by pride comes contention (Prov. 13:10)
- When pride comes, then comes shame: but with the lowly is wisdom (Prov. 11:2)
- A man's pride shall bring him low; but, honor shall uphold the humble in spirit (Prov. 29:23)
- Whoever exalts themselves shall be abased; and those who humble themselves shall be exalted (Luke 14:11)

God detests pride, but humility prompts the gift of His grace. Hard times expose our pride while highlighting our need for God and for others.

Adversity is evidence of spiritual warfare

A Christian must be aware of the spiritual battle that rages between God and the enemy, Satan. Learn to recognize that sometimes adversity comes in the form of spiritual warfare through weariness, confusion, division, and spiritual oppression. In the midst of trials do not become overwhelmed or yield to the temptation to give up; instead, allow the Word of God, Christ Jesus, to encourage you.

Adversity is God's method of purifying our faith

Faith is essential for living the Christian life, because the ways of God are opposite to the natural inclinations of man. Thus, adversity may come at the hand of those who mock God's principles, or it may come when we violate God's principles. In either case, adversity is designed to strengthen our faith.

Adversity is a reminder to pray for our authorities

Those who are in positions of responsibility are supposed to provide protection for those under their care. When there are failures in the life of a leader, their "umbrella of protection" weakens, and those who are under that authority become more vulnerable to the attacks of the

enemy. As we experience the pressures of temptation, we should realize that those who are in authority over us are also undergoing temptations and are in need of our intercessory prayer.

Adversity is a signal to reevaluate priorities

In troubled times we need to consider our priorities and discern if we are spending enough time preserving the most important aspects of our lives – our relationships with God and others. We should regularly evaluate the health of our relationships and invest the time and effort needed to maintain them honorably.

When we do not spend time with God, memorizing and meditating on His Word, and praying we miss out on one of the most important means God uses to give us wisdom and to change our heart. We also rob others of the spiritual encouragement, direction and testimonies we could share if we were faithfully spending time with God. Adversities that come because of having wrong priorities may be the consequence of trying to do more than God intended for us to do.

Adversity reveals if our work will last

How we weather the storms of life shows what we have built our lives on. Paul wrote: Everyone's work shall be made manifest (1 Cor. 3:13).

Adversity tests our friendships

The strain of adversity impacts relationships. Hard times reveal if people want to get or to give. Fair-weather friends won't endure the test of trials and difficulties, but true friends will remain to offer support, comfort and encouragement in the midst of challenges.

Adversity invites us to experience the power of God

One of the ultimate purposes of adversity is to cause us to desire more of Christ's power in our lives. Troubles reveal that on our own we can't live in a way that honors God. We need to rely on His Word and receive God's grace. God works within the Christian in a mighty way making them dead to sin and alive to Christ and enabling them to walk in the power of Holy Spirit rather than according to fleshly desires.

Adversity prepares us to comfort others

One of the most valuable results of adversity is that through it we receive God's comfort, which we are then able to share with others who face similar troubles.

The Apostle James recommended a surprising response to troubles: My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations knowing this, that the trying of our faith works patience. So let patience have her perfect work that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing (James 1:2-4).

Paul expressed a similar perspective on adversity: We glory in tribulations also knowing tribulation works patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope makes not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our heart by Holy Spirit which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:3-6).

These men understood that in light of what Christ did for us by providing salvation, the difficulties we experience in this life take on new meaning. The entirety of this article: "What are God's purposes for allowing adversity in my life?" will be found on the following website



Adversity is difficult to confront, and so too are the emotions that can cause us to feel as though we're left alone to navigate the ever rising swells of troubled waters. As I discovered, additional problems arise such as PTSD when we consistently dwell on our circumstances.

With adversity so too comes fear! You may be all too familiar with stress and anxiety and those times when we are left feeling all alone – needless to say – can be overwhelming. Those times when we too are getting up to go about our day searching for the One our heart loves, but not finding Him (SS 3:2).

I share God's Word so confidence and assurance in the faithfulness of the Lord can be known. So comfort and strength from the Lord can keep us standing anchored in faith instead of drowning in the swells of emotion. For God's Word, Christ Jesus, is not too difficult to find or beyond your reach.

You need not think or ask: Who will ascend into heaven to get God's Word and proclaim to us so we may honor the Lord by obeying Him.

Nor is it necessary to feel as though God's Word is so far as being beyond the sea. Why wonder and ask: Who will cross the sea to get God's Word and proclaim it so we may honor the Lord by obeying Him?

No! Christ Jesus, our Savior, our Helper, our Protector, our strong Shelter...God's Word is in our mouth and in our heart so we can at all times in every circumstance honor the Lord by obeying what He has said (Deut. 30:11-14).



When we invest our time in God's Word, Holy Spirit will bring revelation as He did for me as I wrote about the numbers mentioned in these verses of Genesis 8:1-9:16. I hope you too are amazed for they provide a perfect explanation for the composition of these booklets.

- **40** means a time of testing – Though we may not have known the meaning of this number we each have experienced difficult and challenging times. With knowledge of God and His Word, Holy Spirit can give us strength and hope and confidence to stand steadfast in the faith because God's Word of Truth and Life is a Rock solid foundation. We don't have to allow our thoughts and

emotions to be in control and shake us to the core. We can allow Holy Spirit to strengthen us at our very core bringing our heart and mind and will into agreement with God's Word.

- 1 means Unity between Father, Son and Holy Spirit – there is no easy explanation for the Trinity. We are told nothing is impossible for God (Luke 1:37). One God has the power to manifest each portion of His being into three individual Beings. God created mankind in His image as representatives and individual reminders of the Trinity of God by giving us His unique design – body, soul (intellect, emotions and free-will) and spirit.



Unfortunately, as a result of mankind's fall from God's glory due to sin (Rom. 3:23), the most important part of our being – our spirit – has been stymied (encumbered, restrained, interfered with) by our body and soul. Sadly, the weighted importance of our eternal spiritual being is devalued and under-minded by the physical demands and desires of a world that is governed by the hands of time.

Yes, God has given us this gift of time to determine whether it is right (even beneficial) in His sight to listen to others rather than to Him (Acts 4:19 Message).

When a person not only hears but experiences the work of the Trinity – Love, Grace and Truth – deep within their core, they will come to understand the Trinity is working in every detail of their lives, for God sends His Spirit to reveal all of His goodness comes to us through Christ Jesus (John 1:17).



Holy Spirit will work to root our faith and trust deeply in the love of Christ, which constrains (persuades, convinces, compels) us, to share the goodness of God. Yes, there's no question – we can't keep quiet about what we have come to know (Acts 4:20 Message) about the Trinity of Love and Grace and Truth.

That Jesus has placed us as a seal over His heart, like a seal on His arm; for Love is as strong as death, His jealousy (compassion, zeal, fever) unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. Many waters cannot quench His love; rivers cannot wash it away. If one were to give all the wealth of their

house for His love; it would be utterly scorned (SS 8:6-7); for jealousy arouses a husband's fury, and he will show no mercy when he takes revenge. He will not accept any compensation; he will refuse the bribe, however great it is (Prov. 6:34-35).

Your Maker is your Husband – the Lord Almighty is His name – the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; He is called the God of all the earth. He calls you back as if you were a wife deserted and distressed in spirit. But do not be afraid; you will not suffer shame. Do not fear disgrace; you will not be humiliated. You will forget the shame of your youth, and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood (Isa. 54:4-6).



- **601** a number which means contemplate your life. Consider, weigh, wrestle with God as Jacob did. Though we have been given freedom to think and believe and forge a path in this world for ourselves, we have definitely had a one-sided wrestling match with God.

This is the most amazing realization – our thoughts and opinions are insignificant because they will not affect God's purpose and

His plans. Our beliefs and assumptions only have the power to affect the plan and purpose God has prepared for us.

At our church, as a congregation we speak this proclamation: I was made with value and purpose. My life has promise and potential as it unfolds in accordance to God's eternal plan.

There is nothing too trivial for God knows every individual detail. He counts the hairs on our head (Luke 12:7), and collects all our tears (Psalm 56:8 NLT). God's immense interest and love and concern for mankind has been established and recorded throughout the pages of His written word.

Before God started the clock of Time, pain and suffering had emerged from a heart defiled by the evil of pride and greed and lustful coveting. Evil and sin and pride have synonymous meanings and purposes – for pain and suffering and loss to occur.

In all of this, God does what He has always done the miraculous, for He works good in all of life's trials and tribulations and troubles to bring about salvation. God doesn't just work to save us from difficult times He works to save us for all eternity. In the

eras of time, sin and guilt have had consequences that must be paid, BUT GOD, sent His Son to pay the eternal consequence for sin and guilt and evil's curse of death.



- 27 has this meaning - Holy Truth - All Truth is in Christ Jesus (Eph. 4:21 AMP). God's love and kindness are forever; His Word of Truth is as enduring as the heavens (Ps. 89:2 TLB). The Truth is we are only a step away from death (1 Sam. 20:3 TLB).

We don't know when that step will be taken, but we most definitely don't have to condemn ourselves to an eternity of pain and suffering and the regret that accompanies such a significant loss- eternal separation from all that is Good and Joyful and Peace-giving.

God has given us this gift of time so we can stop and consider where we are and what we're doing. God's Word tells us we're in a cosmos star-flung with constellations (Amos 5:8a Message), and it is God, Who determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name (Ps. 147:4). We're in a world God wakes up each morning, and puts to bed each night (Amos 5:8b Message).

God's glory is on tour in the skies, God-craft on exhibit across the horizon. Day after day the sun pours out its speech; night after night the moon and the stars display their knowledge. Their words aren't recorded, but their silence fills the earth; unspoken Truth is spoken everywhere (Ps. 19:1-4 Message). Great is our Lord and mighty in power; His understanding has no limit (Ps. 147:5).

He dips water from the ocean, and gives the land a drink. God does all this. And He can destroy it as easily as make it. He can turn vast wonder into total waste. People hate this kind of talk. Raw Truth is never popular (Amos5:9-10 Message). God's Word of Truth doesn't just invade our personal space, His Spirit of Truth penetrates our soul, which means for many the Truth is too close for comfort, and they are uncomfortable with Jesus (Matt. 5:11 Message).



- 2 ironically has 2 different meanings. The first meaning is about unity and reflection, like a mirror or two sides of the same coin. It involves the idea of a witness, a pair or two becoming one. The

second meaning is about division or differences and centers around the idea of a choice or a duality in options. The imagery used for this would be life and death, patterns of separation and a delineation between two halves of the same thing

<https://15degreesne.com/what-does-the-number-2-mean-in-the-bible/>

- **17** has this meaning – Victory, Sword of the Lord – To Him belong strength and victory; both the deceived and deceiver are His (Job 12:16). With God we will gain the victory, and He will trample down our enemies (Ps. 60:12). For God has given us His Word:

“Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit.”

Zech. 4:6

The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. Matthew recorded in chapter 12:18-21 what God said:

“Here is My Servant Whom I have chosen, the One I love, in Whom I delight; I put My Spirit on Him, and He will proclaim justice to the nations. Jesus did not quarrel or cry out; no one heard His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break, and a smoldering wick He will not snuff out,

till He leads justice to victory. In His name the nations will hope.”

The Lord fulfilled what was spoken of Him through the prophet Isaiah as recorded in Chapter 42:2-3.



So I encourage you take up the shield of faith, for with the Spirit of Truth standing in your corner, you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one (Eph. 6:16-17).

God’s Word, Christ Jesus gives us His shield of victory, and His right hand sustains us; He stooped down so God could exalt those (Ps. 18:35) who know the Lord will fight for us; we need only to be still (Ex. 14:14).

Many times I played the role of God to do all that I thought could be done. Giving the problem to God then taking it back spinning my wheels trying to do more.

I took on the role of Holy Spirit trying to imitate His call, and draw people to Jesus. The problem, instead of revealing our need for a

Savior, I displayed a very different kind of lord - pushy and self-assertive. I wasn't being led by Holy Spirit, I was being driven by fear and pride and unrefined-behaviors that sent people away from me and any mention of my Lord and Savior.



When I came to the end of myself, when my strength, my allies, my understanding and reasoning that once seemed so logical was stilled, the One Who remained was Jesus, God's Word. There's a "Christianese" saying, 'When all you have is Jesus then you have all you'll ever need.' Until this becomes a literal, matter-of-fact, experience this statement won't seem to be powered by very much logic.

I was a mess - confused, mortified and seemingly so all alone. How many times my only prayer was "Help" as I lay curled-up on the floor. The pain was intense, but was also intensified by the physical and neurological symptoms that arose as a result of Lyme's Disease that had gone undiagnosed for years.

I was so ingrained in the "human condition" of learned behaviors, defensive and coping mechanisms, character deficits and all that comes

about as we adjust to living and surviving in a world that fosters fear and dis-ease, disorder and violence.

Jeremiah wrote: Such destroying armies that plunder the land of the living; the sword of the Lord will be seen to devour from one end to the other, nothing shall escape. Mankind has sown wheat but reaped thorns; they have worked hard, but it does them no good. They shall harvest a crop of shame, if the fierce anger of the Lord is upon them (Jer. 12:12-13).



As a result of doing what is natural, leaning on my own understanding and not giving thought to how significant and impactful the spiritual implications of Good and Evil are to our emotional, psychological and physical well-being, I was steadily approaching the end of the road where neon signs were flashing – hopeless, inept, useless, unlovable, this way to relief and rest – signed Death.

I've had these signs flashing at times over the years, but like any other advertisement when there's no interest they're left in the rear-view mirror. However, on more than one occasion I was floundering on the ground, grasping for air because the father of lies does not follow the principle of catch and release.

When I was fourteen the enemy had reeled me in very close to that pit of destruction. Of course I thought if I died I would end up in heaven. I had no idea where I believe my true destination would have been.

Needless to say, I couldn't fathom it was with loving-kindness the Lord rescued me from the clutches of death. Because I just naturally believed the worst about myself, why wouldn't I believe the worst about God? Didn't He also reject, abandon, and betray me?

I had no clue that even in all the struggles of life God is always working good because that is Who He is. A very good Father, Who stands looking across the horizon waiting with opened arms for His prodigals to return.



It was at the age of forty when I too would experience the welcoming and compassionate embrace of God. Those signs, like shiny irresistible lures advertising relief in death, once again seemed so dazzling to my eyes. Here again the number forty this time representing the years I spent coping and causing what naturally occurs in life some good, some not so good, some bad, some really very ugly stuff.

You may be wondering my point. Well, during those years of not viewing myself so kindly, I also wasn't viewing God so kindly either, since I thought He rejects what's not good enough for heaven. So I made this determination - no matter, what I would always be very grateful for family. My complete attention was given to doing all that I could for them.

Did I know the underlying, with the key word being lying, reason was to give proof that I was not unlovable, unworthy, unacceptable, undeserving..!

I didn't know my efforts were an attempt to feel good about myself through the approval, validation and acceptance I received from others. Jeremiah received this and so much more Hope and Truth and Strength from God, Who knows ultimately, all our human effort cannot accomplish for us what intimate knowledge and trust in the Source of Good can - Rest and Peace and true Contentment.



There were times when I felt rested and at ease and possibly even content; however, when emotions were high the ride could prove to be

a wild one for everyone concerned. This was the case when a certain family problem arose, which turned out to be for me a life-changing experience.

Yes, it was serious, but I should never have received it as I did - a personal affront. You know those times when the heart is slapped, when those dreadful gut punches or kicks below the belt are felt with no physical contact. Yeah, I was definitely reeling, but I was not being cast into that eternal waterless pit.

Amazingly and rather ironically, it was God reeling me in on the line Holy Spirit casts so the vast variety of the world's catches can gain access to the source of all Truth, Christ Jesus.

You see, even though that immature and childish thought that I was rejected by God, followed me into adulthood, family members were coming to the Lord. They were sharing the Good News of Redemption and Renewal and Recovery.

Things God is not only willing to accomplish for us, but has given us His Word so with Holy Spirit's help we can make the necessary

adjustments to bring balance in our life so peace of heart and mind can be enjoyed.

Negativity comprised so much of who I was that my first impression – my family had joined a cult. However, there was a loved one who made seriously unhealthy choices. You know the kind of choices, when a phone rings at an odd hour, there's a breathless moment when maybe, just maybe, that anticipated horrible news was arriving.

Instead, beyond every reason for hope, it seemed as though she was arising from the ashes like that Phoenix. So with all of this new activity going on, when those neon signs once again began to dazzle and allure me, I thought I would look into all the fuss being made about Jesus.



A decision I will be eternally grateful for making. I didn't go willingly by my own volition to the Lord. Turmoil and heartache and sorrow caused me to flounder like a fish on dry ground, but praise God, with choice there will always be two pointing arrows – Good and Evil, Right or Wrong, Life or Death – thankfully I chose to flounder at the feet of Jesus.

Over the years I have blundered and struggled, weaved and teetered and tottered, but I never stopped gathering knowledge of Jesus. As a result, I think differently. No longer does negativity comprise the majority of my thoughts and opinions and beliefs.

With patience and loving-kindness Holy Spirit gently planted heavenly seeds from God's Word within the vital organs of my soul until the new beginnings of Harmony and Peace and Gratitude could continually blossom.

When something doesn't align with God's Word I turn to Jesus and receive the boldness and confidence and inner strength to profess if only to myself, as Jesus did, "It is written...."



In unfriendly, unfamiliar or uncomfortable situations, I've been reminding myself to be still because emotion and unwanted opinions can only work to make matters worse.

I have learned the importance of respect for God and His Word and for others. So I talk with Jesus, and Holy Spirit whispers what I need to

hear and do – not try but do – from God’s Word helping me to remember the Lord is with me, the Word of God is fighting for me.

HELP FROM HEAVEN

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=guyWNLTvOy4>

There is a moment, every heart needs a rescue
There is a season, every soul needs a breakthrough

Help from heaven

We all need, help from heaven

There is a whisper, a voice of hope inside you
There is an answer, a name above to guide you

Help from heaven

We all need, help from heaven

When the world is on our shoulders
And we need a hand to hold us
When no miracle is found, still believe
When the sea of night surrounds us
And all questions try to drown us

Just believe, just believe in help from heaven
Help from heaven

There is a reason, these tears have not been wasted

There is a future, for all these broken pieces

Look to heaven

All we need, is help from heaven

When the road ahead is hidden

And we need a new beginning

When the battle's closing in, still believe

One more step into the promise

And the hands of grace that hold us

Just believe, just believe in help from heaven

Help from heaven

Taking heart and holding on

Hope is closer than we know

Heaven will not let us go

Help from heaven

Taking heart and holding on

Hope is closer than we know

Heaven will not let us go
Help from heaven

Song by Matt Redman ft. Natasha Bedingfield



I can hope to be kind and patient and gentle, but when I'm unsuccessful I know without any doubt I'm accepted, I've been validated and justified, I am loved by my God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I can repent and forgive, make amends and place myself and my mistaken judgments and behaviors at the feet of Jesus because I know my Lord and Savior is helping me accomplish this desire, to be more like Him in the good, the not so good, the bad and hopefully not too many more times of the ugly.



- The number 7 was used three times in the verses chosen from Genesis, and it represents fullness, completion, perfection. God's Word tells us it has pleased the Father that all the divine fullness (the sum of the divine perfection, powers and attributes)

should dwell in Jesus permanently. God purposed that through the Lord's service and intervention all things should be **completely** reconciled back to Himself, whether on earth or in heaven, as through Jesus, the Father made peace by means of the blood of Christ's cross (Col. 1:19-20 AMP).



Now we are looking in a mirror that gives only a dim (blurred) reflection (of reality as in a riddle or enigma), but then (when perfection comes) we shall see in reality and face-to-face! Now I know in part (imperfectly), but then I shall know and understand fully and clearly, even in the same manner as I have been fully and clearly known and understood by God.

And so these three - faith, hope and love abide. (Faith - conviction and belief respecting man's relation to God and divine things; Hope - joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation; Love - true respect and affection and appreciation for God and for people, growing out of God's love for and in us), but the greatest of these is Love (1 Cor. 13:12-13 AMP).

So I pray out of God's glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your heart through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in Love, in God's Word, may have Power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now to Him Who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! (Eph. 3:16-21).



My hope is that with knowledge and understanding of God and His Word, we would be transformed in our thinking and attitude as Holy Spirit works within so we can receive all God has for us.

And, by keeping our focus on God's Word, Christ Jesus, we will just naturally be released from any grasp evil may have in our lives - fear, anxiety, worry, sin, addiction.....

For I am convinced and sure of this very thing, because of your partnership in the Gospel, God Who began a good work in us will continue until the day of Jesus Christ (right up to the time of His return), developing (that good work) and perfecting and bringing it to full completion in us (Phil. 1:6 AMP). From the fullness of God's grace we all receive one blessing after another (John 1:16).



We are made complete through our union with Christ, God's Word, Who is the Head over every ruler and authority. Some came to the Lord with flesh that was "circumcised," but it is not a physical procedure that Jesus performs on those who come to Him; instead, it's a spiritual circumcision - the cutting away of our sinful nature.

Through baptism we are buried with Christ, and with Him God raises us to new life because we trust His mighty power, Holy Spirit, Who raised Christ from the dead. We were spiritually dead because of our sins and because our sinful nature was not yet cut away.

God made us alive with Christ, for He forgave all our sins. He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. In this way, Jesus disarmed the spiritual rulers

and authorities. He shamed them publicly by His victory over them on the cross (Col. 2:10-15 NLT).



God's forgiveness of sin was accomplished for everyone through Jesus. When a person comes to the Lord confessing with their mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believing in their heart that God raised Him from the dead, they will be saved. For it is with our heart that we believe and are justified, and it is with our mouth that we confess and are saved.

Scripture says: Anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame. For there is no difference, the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on Him, for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (Rom. 10:9-13).

From that moment on God's Word will lead us on the Path of Life. Maybe not in this world, but in the Lord's presence there is fullness of joy. Maybe not at the hands of other people, even those we may love, but at God's right hand there are pleasures forevermore (Ps. 16:11).

For in Jesus all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and we have been given fullness in Christ, Who is the Head (Col. 2:9-10).

Yes, God is awe-inspiring, profoundly impressive and terrible is He out of His holy places; the God of Israel Himself gives strength and fullness of might to His people. Blessed be our God! (Ps. 68:35 AMP)
At all times, in all things no matter the circumstance be and do all for God's glory!



So, with all this in mind, there are many reasons why God isn't given glory in all the things we do; however, there are some reasons we can only come to understand with God's help.

Paul offers an explanation: We know the Word is spiritual, but I am not. I'm so human. Sin rules me as if I were its slave. I don't understand why I act the way I do. I don't do the good I want to do, and I do the evil I hate.

And, if I don't want to do what I do, that means I agree God's Word is good. Thank God He saves me from this body that brings me death through our Lord, Christ Jesus (Rom. 7:14-16,24-25 ERV).

Yes, salvation is due to our God, Who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb, to them we owe our deliverance (Rev. 7:10 AMP). Salvation is not of our own doing, it came not through our own striving it is the gift of God so no one can boast.

Salvation is not the result of what anyone can possibly accomplish, so no one can pride themselves in it or take God's glory for themselves. By God's free grace we are saved, through Jesus Who delivers us from judgment and makes us partakers of salvation through our faith (Eph. 2:8-10 AMP).



Therefore, judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness, and will expose the motives of a person's heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God (1 Cor. 4:5), for God Himself is Judge (Ps. 50:8).

If anyone hears God's Word, and doesn't take the Lord seriously, He won't reject them. Jesus said:

"I didn't come to judge or reject the world. I came to save the world. You need to know that whoever puts Me off, refusing

to take in what I'm saying they are willfully choosing rejection. The Word, the Word-made-flesh that I have spoken and that I am, that Word and no other is the last word. The Father Who sent Me told Me what to say and how to say it. And I know exactly what His command produces: real and eternal life. What the Father told Me, I tell you."

John 12:47-50 Message

So don't be nitpickers; stop judging by mere appearance, and make a right judgment (John 7:24); use your head – and heart! – to discern what is authentically right (John 7:24 Message).

Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil (1 Thess. 5:21). Do not believe every spirit. In other words, don't believe everything you hear. Carefully weigh and examine what people tell you. Not everyone who talks about God comes from God.

Those who are being led by the Spirit of God will openly confess their faith in Jesus – the Son of God, Who came as an actual flesh-and-blood person. Everyone who refuses to confess faith in Jesus has nothing in common with God. This is the spirit of antichrist (1 John 4:1-3 Message).



We can identify spirits such as anger, hatred, prejudice, violence, addiction, greed, deception,,, but we don't have to be identified as a conveyor of such spirits. My hope is the power and influence of what is unseen would be made apparent because

OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE MATTERS

God who is Spirit (John 4:24) has given us His Word:

1. **To Strengthen** - The Lord has been a stronghold for the poor, a stronghold for the humble person in their distress, a refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat (Isa. 25:4 ASB). Take a strong hold of God's right hand, for He is our strength, our safe retreat when trouble descends (Jer. 16:19 Message). God's Word strengthens us in faith, not in might, so we can truly understand Jesus has a strong hold on everyone who comes to Him. God's will is the Lord shall lose none who look to the Son and believe in Him. They shall have eternal life, and Jesus will raise them up on that last day (John 6:37-40).

2. **To Establish** – so God’s Word would be recognized, honored and obeyed:

“If My people would observe their way
To walk before Me in Truth,
With all their heart and with all their soul
Humbling themselves to pray and seek My face
And turn from their wicked ways,
Then I will hear from heaven
Forgive their sins
And will heal their land.”

1 Kings 2:4 YLT, 2 Chron. 7:14

They will learn how they ought to conduct themselves (1 Tim. 3:15) for the Lord Jesus has cleared a way for us to come to God (1 Thess. 3:11). God’s will is for us to be sanctified, and learn to control our own body in a way that is upright and honorable, not in passionate lust like those who do not know their heavenly Father.

God does not call us to be impure, but to live a life blessed by Him. Those who reject this as Truth are not rejecting men but God, Who gives us His Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 4:1-7).

3. **To Exhort** – For a wise person will scale and examine the mighty walls they've erected and bring down the strongholds in which they trust (Prov. 21:22). So I stir up your sincere mind by putting you in remembrance of the words which were spoken by the prophets and the teachings of the Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. In the last days mockers shall come, walking in their own lusts and saying: Where is the promise of the Lord's coming?

This they willfully forget, that there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the Word of God; by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. The heavens that now are, and the earth, have by the same Almighty Word been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly people.

Forget not this one thing beloved, one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, but is longsuffering toward mankind, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. For the day of the Lord will come as a thief; the heavens shall pass away with great noise, and the elements

shall be dissolved with fervent heat. The earth and the works that are therein shall be burnt up.

Seeing that these things are thus to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in righteous living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, looking for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness as God has promised (2 Peter 3:1-13 ASV).

4. **To Encourage** – Open up before God, keep nothing back; He'll do whatever needs to be done: He'll validate your life in the clear light of day, and stamp you with His seal of approval, His Holy Spirit. Quiet down before God to be prayerful before Him (Ps. 37:5-7 Message). For how can someone keep their way pure? By living according to God's Word, so seek the Lord with all your heart. Don't stray from His instructions; instead, keep God's Word hidden in your heart so you might not sin against Him.

Though life may lay us low in the dust, according to His Word God preserves and keeps us from deceitful ways, through His Word God's graciousness is revealed. So recount your ways to your heavenly Father, and He will answer with teachings that

sets a heart free. Holy Spirit will help you understand so you can meditate on all God's wonders.

So ask Holy Spirit to give you understanding, and direct you in the way of Life for there you will find delight. For God's unfailing love comes to us through Christ Jesus, our salvation according to God's promise gives us hope and comfort in our suffering when it's truly understood God's promise preserves our lives (Psalm 119).

5. **To Comfort**: The Lord hears your voice. God has answered our cry for mercy (Ps. 116:1). So ask of Him in the name of Jesus, and you will receive, and your joy will be complete (John 16:34). Yes, God has turned His ear to you so you can call on Him as long as you live. For now it is crystal clear, the cords of death were entangling you, the anguish of the grave was too come upon you. Trouble and sorrow have at times been overwhelming, but now you know call on the Lord, Who saves.

God is full of compassion; the Lord is gracious and righteous. He protects us when we're in great need. He delivers us so our soul can be at rest once more, knowing with all our heart the Lord has

been and is and always will be good to us. The Lord has rescued us from death; He will rescue our eyes from tears and our feet from stumbling in the darkness of this world that we may walk before Him in the land of the living.

So believe and tell the Lord when you're greatly distressed, when you're confused by the deceptive ways of mankind.

Acknowledge with all your heart, all the goodness the Lord directs to you could never ever be repaid. So do the one thing you can, tell the Lord you love Him by honoring God's Word (Ps. 116:1-12).



As mentioned earlier, the number seven means fullness, complete and perfection. Since this number was mentioned three times in our opening verses, since it has three meanings, and since our God is triune, and the number three also signifies completeness the following clearly will reveal how our God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - have actually given the fullness of meaning to the number seven:

1. The seven miracles of Jesus - The world and its FULLNESS are God's (Ps. 50:12 AMP)

2. The seven "I AM" Statements of Jesus - We rejoice and exultingly glory in God in His love and PERFECTION] through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have now received our reconciliation (Rom. 5:11 AMP).
3. The Seven Churches - the body of Christ - The God of all grace, Who imparts all blessing and favor has called you to His own eternal glory in Christ Jesus, and will Himself COMPLETE and make you what you ought to be, establish and ground you securely, and strengthen and settle you (1 Peter 5:10 AMP).

The 7 Miracles of Jesus Recorded in the Book of John

Impossible!

Has this word crossed your lips lately as you peer at an unsolvable problem? The dictionary defines *impossible* as "incapable of being done, attained, or fulfilled: insuperably difficult."

So, what's your "insuperably difficult" circumstance? Perhaps an adult child who has strayed in the wrong direction? Maybe a marriage in which you and your spouse hardly speak to each other? A physical ailment declared untreatable by a doctor? The categories of "impossibilities" goes on and on. Whatever the obstacle, it's *impassable*;

whatever the situation, it's *intolerable*. No counselor, friend, pastor, or family member can bring the needed change.

If I've described your situation, I have great news. I'm so glad that I memorized it years ago and call it to mind often. Here it is:

*We are all faced with a series of great opportunities,
Brilliantly disguised as impossible situations.*

What's that impossibility in your life? Inside its uncrackable shell is an incredible opportunity waiting to come to life. How do I know? Because Jesus has the power to make the impossible possible! How can I be certain? Jesus demonstrated such Power during His ministry. The book of John records seven miracles that show Jesus' astonishing Power over things that can stump us. Let's look at all seven briefly and the power they display:

Seven Signs

1. Changing water into wine at Cana (John 2:1-12)

Power over Quality

At a wedding in Cana, when the wine had run out, Jesus told the servants to fill six stone pots with water and take a cupful to the headwaiter. Putting the cup to his lips, the waiter tasted

that Jesus had not only turned the water into wine, but the best wine.

2. Healing the royal official's son in Capernaum (John 4:46-54)

Power over Distance

Later, a royal official came to Cana to ask Jesus to heal his dying son in Capernaum, about twenty miles away. Without moving, Jesus told him, "Go back home. Your son will live!" Jesus healed the boy from a distance.

3. Healing the paralytic at Bethesda (Jon 5:1-15)

Power over Time

By the pool of Bethesda, Jesus saw a man who had been disabled for 38 years. The Lord commanded him, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!" It didn't matter the man had been lame for almost four decades, when Jesus said, "Walk," he walked.

4. Feeding the 5000 (John 6:5-14)

Power over Quantity

Next, Jesus fed a crowd of over 5,000 people with five small loaves of bread and two fish. How could so little feed so many?

The math didn't add up for the disciples, but lack of enough never limited Jesus' ability.

5. Jesus walked on water (John 6:5-21)

Power over Nature

When a strong wind stirred up the sea and the terrified disciples strained at the oars to make it to shore, Jesus walked on the water and calmed the storm.

6. Healing the man who was blind from birth (John 9:1-7)

Power over Misfortune

In Jerusalem, Jesus noticed a man blind since birth. Without hype or hoopla, the Light of the World brought light to the man's eyes.

7. Bringing Lazarus back to life (John 11:1-44)

Power over Death

When Lazarus died, his sisters' hopes died with him. However, Jesus transformed their impossibility into the perfect opportunity to glorify God by bringing Lazarus back to life.



Humanly speaking, each of these problems seemed as impossible as calculus to a preschooler. But to Jesus, the solution was obvious. He understood, “What is impossible for people is possible with God” (Luke 18:27). He lived every day by Jeremiah’s prayer:

“O Sovereign LORD! You made the heavens and earth by Your strong hand and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for You!” Jeremiah 32:17.

Why don’t you take a moment to pray Jeremiah’s prayer regarding your impossibility? Finish the phrase, “O Sovereign Lord, nothing is too hard for You regarding _____,” and write down your personal impossibility. Then commit to surrendering that impossibility to the Lord from this day on.

Miracles are surprising, unexplainable, and as rare as a flawless pearl. But they do occur! We can’t predict when God will sovereignly say, “Now,” and transform our impossibilities into opportunities. What we can do is believe in His power and rest in His sovereignty.

Let me add a final thought. When Jesus issued the Great Commission, He invited each of us to live in the realm of the humanly impossible (*to walk in Faith and Truth and Love joined with Him in the realm of the miraculous*).

<https://insight.org/resources/article-library/individual/seven-impossibilities-jesus-made-possible>

I hope you enjoyed reading this article, “Seven Impossibilities Jesus Made Possible,” by Pastor Chuck Swindoll. On a personal note I believe miracles are happening everyday all around us. Maybe they are not recognized as readily as the Red Sea parting so we can walk on dry land, but this is exactly what God does for us when we overcome what was once viewed as an “impossibility.”

My family witnessed the miraculous God performed for my husband and myself. We went from being bankrupt – so much loss – a home, a business, our marriage. God made it possible for us to buy a lake side home, blessed us with a very profitable business and reconciled and restored our marriage better than it ever was before.

Nothing happened over night but neither did the messes we had set before Him. We sought insight from the Lord by participating in marriage ministries, a renewal and recovery program Celebrate Recovery. Wherever Holy Spirit was moving, for there are things He helped us pack away so He could unpack the things of God, and move us into the realms of the miraculous – where impossible is never found!

The greatest miracle is changing a stubborn, willful heart so what God wants and needs to do and give to us can be received. All that's needed is an open heart and a bit of willingness. For I believe when the concern and compassion and love of God is experienced, all His heavenly blessings will come upon you and overtake you (Deut. 28:2) as you find yourself doing the work He asks - Believing, Trusting, Hoping in the One He sent (John 6:29)!

<https://insight.org/resources/article-library/individual/seven-impossibilities-jesus-made-possible>



The 7 "I AM" Statements of Jesus

John wrote his Gospel so that you may believe Jesus is the Christ. When God calls Himself the "I Am" in Exodus 3, it's a pivotal moment in redemptive history. God reveals Himself to His people and comes to redeem them out of exile and lead them into a new life. God's name discloses who He is and what He is like. He is the I Am, the eternal, unchanging, self-existent one, infinite and glorious in every way, and above and beyond all created things. He is God.

When Jesus applies the title “I Am” to Himself, He claims to be God (John 8:58). Not a helper to God or a great teacher, but the divine, eternal, pre-existent, infinite, perfect Being. He is Israel’s God. He is greater than Moses because He is the God of Moses. He has life in Himself and He can give life to us. The Jews knew taking on this title was making such a claim, which is why they immediately picked up stones to kill Him (8:59).

The seven “I Am” statements in John might best be understood as falling under and echoing this initial, ultimate claim of Jesus. He is God, and He is the God of Israel. All the Old Testament and God’s redemptive acts were pointing to the coming of Jesus as the God-in-flesh, the true and better Israel, and the fulfillment of all the Old Testament types and shadows.

1) I Am the Bread of Life

Jesus enters a dialogue with Jews who had followed Him because of His miracles – including the recent feeding of the 5,000 – and yet they missed the reality behind them (He is the Divine Messiah). More important than solving their physical hunger for food through bread, Jesus offers Himself as the Bread of Life to fulfill deeper longings and an eternal need.

There is more to the Bread from God than the bread itself (Exodus 16). It's not an earthly bread but a heavenly Bread. It comes from above – from God – and comes down to us only by His grace and goodness. We need more than physical bread and we need it from someone other than ourselves. God will provide what we need most, and we should raise our eyes in faith.

Jesus takes this Old Testament background of bread for God's people and He claims to be the Bread of Life. He explains the bread in the wilderness of Exodus was only a temporary provision, and that it points to a true and eternal Bread from heaven that God would later give. This bread is now before the Jews. The manna pictures Jesus, Who is sent from God, comes down from heaven, must be taken by faith, Who must be eaten/fully taken in, and Who sustains and gives us life.

OT Background: Exodus 16; Deut. 8:3; Ps. 78:23-25

NT Fulfillment: John 6:22-59, especially verses 28-35.

2) I Am the Light of the World

Light is one of the most prominent themes in John's Gospel. The world is lost and hopeless in darkness (John 1:4-14). The darkness cannot

change its condition. Light must enter and invade. One cannot see or lead others in the darkness, so light is necessary to guide us and walk forward. John picks up light from a rich Old Testament heritage and shows how Jesus is the Light.

Based upon the fact that in John 8:12 Jesus ties the idea of being the Light with His people following after Him in the light, the most likely Old Testament background in mind here is the light of God's presence leading Israel in the wilderness by means of the pillar of fire (Exodus 13-14).

Just as the Israelites were led by the pillar of fire (light) in the exodus and saved from the Egyptians as they crossed the Red Sea, so also Jesus says those who follow Him (Light) will have (Him) Life.

OT Background: Exodus 13:17-22 (cf. Ex. 14:19-20); Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6 (both verses are in the four Servant Songs of Isaiah).

NT Fulfillment: John 8:12-30. See also John 1:4-5; 3:19-21; 9:5; 12:35-36).

3) I Am the Door or Gate

4) I Am the Good Shepherd

In John 10:1-18, Jesus makes two of the I Am sayings together. He claims He is the both the Door through which the sheep enter as well

as the Shepherd who knows the sheep and lays down His life for them. The metaphor of the door does not have the rich Old Testament background as shepherding imagery does. But, Jesus is both the only way (Door) a person enters into the presence of God, and the One Who gives His life for the life of sheep, whom He knows and protects. He is the One Who gathers the sheep and cares for them (Shepherd) and He's also the means by which they enter and are kept safe (Gate).

We should recall that Jesus is talking to the Pharisees in this conversation. He claims to be a Good Shepherd and Israel's true Shepherd was (in part) a rebuke against them. As the influential teachers in Israel, they should have led the people to Truth. They should have put the people before themselves. They should serve God's agenda rather than their own.

But the Pharisees are like the bad shepherds in Ezekiel 34 and Jeremiah 23, leading them astray through false doctrine, prioritizing themselves over the sheep and abusing them. Through this metaphor, Jesus at once lumps the Pharisees into the camp of the false prophets and bad shepherds of the OT while claiming to be the true and Good Shepherd that those same OT passages promised (Ezek. 34:11-16, 22-24; Jer. 23:3-4).

Jesus comes not to pile burdens on but to relieve them and carry them Himself. Jesus comes not to scatter the sheep but to gather them. Jesus comes not to devour the sheep but to defend them. Jesus comes to seek out, rescue, heal, and feed the sheep. He will do so because He loves God's flock and they belong to Him. This is proven and accomplished by Him giving up His life for His sheep.

OT Background: Psalms 118:20 (gates = door); Ezekiel 34 and Jeremiah 23 (cf. Isaiah 40:11; Numbers 27:15-18; Micah 5:4)

NT Fulfillment: John 10:1-18

5) I Am the Resurrection, and the Life

Similar to other I Am statements, Jesus doesn't just talk about what He can do or give, but Who He is. He doesn't just give bread (like Moses), He is the Bread. He doesn't merely reflect light; He is the Light. So also, in John 11, Jesus says I am the Resurrection and the Life.

The Old Testament background isn't as clear here as other statements, but most commentators believe Genesis 1-3 is partially in view. God is the Creator and Life-giver, granting life to creation and breathing life into Adam. However, the first Adam chose sin which brought about death for mankind and brokenness for creation.

Jesus comes as the second Adam, righteous and blameless in all His ways, He comes to undo what Adam did and reverse the curse (Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15). Where Adam brought about death and decay, Jesus gives life and restoration. He provides not only resurrection and life to individuals who believe in Him but for the entire world.

While many of the Jews wanted things from Jesus without having to receive and believe in Him, the offer of Jesus is Himself. He doesn't give bread and allow people to reject submission and belief to Him, nor does He offer to give life apart from that life being found in Him. These are free and gracious gifts, and they come only in and through Jesus. He is the Resurrection and the Life. He is the 2nd Adam, bringing resurrection and life where the first Adam offered us only death.

OT Background: Genesis 1-3; Isaiah 53:10

NT Fulfillment: John 11:17-27

6) I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

It's likely Jesus is here contrasting Himself to the many ways in the Old Testament that God prescribed how the Jews could approach and relate to Him. The systems of the sacrifices, temple, the curtain, the tabernacle, and other means of worship were temporary "ways" to God.

As the New Testament makes clear, these things in and of themselves did not cleanse or make people acceptable to God, but they were an avenue by which God's people could walk in faith and follow after Him (see Hebrews 8-9).

Jesus contrasts Himself to anything before Him they thought led them to the Father. He is the only One Who provides the way to the Father, but He is also at the same time the full revelation of the Father (Truth). Jesus is telling them there's nowhere else to look; nowhere you need to look or can look to find the true path to God.

Jesus is that one way and that one path. He offers what Israel looked for and needed, and He replaced all prior things that were set up as temporary means by which man relates to God. All of these pointed to Jesus and accomplished limited things (such as only making people ceremonially clean but not truly clean), and He is now here and able to fully accomplish salvation and redemption.

OT Background: Exodus 26:33; Leviticus 16

NT Fulfillment: John 14:6

7) I Am the True Vine

Here in the last I Am statement, Jesus speaks of a vine, a common OT symbol for Israel (God's people). The language of the unfruitful branches is tied to Israel as the desolate vineyard in Isaiah 5, but Jesus says the people of God receive life and fruit by being in Him, as pictured in Isaiah 27:2-6. Jesus is not simply saying Christians are fruitful by resting in Him (though this is true), He's making the redemptive-historical claim He is the new Israel.

He both fulfills Israel's destiny (because Israel never could) and is the One in Whom the people of God find true, flourishing, fruitful life. He is the true and better Israel, succeeding where they failed, bringing flourishing life and fruit where they dried out and offered nothing on the vine.

OT Background: Two vineyard songs: Isaiah 5:1-7 (the desolate vineyard) & Isaiah 27:2-6 (the fruitful vineyard).

NT Fulfillment: John 15:1-6

<https://indycrowe.com/2019/02/13/the-7-i-am-statements-of-jesus-ot-background-nt-meaning/>



Jesus said to John, who had fallen at His feet as though dead:

"Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades. "

"Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in My right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven Churches." John 1:17-20

The Seven Lampstands are the Seven Churches

1. Ephesus

Desirable

To the angel of the Church in Ephesus write: These are the words of Him Who holds the seven stars in His right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands:

"I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men that you have tested those who claim to be apostles, but they are not. You have found them false. You have persevered and have

endured hardships for My name, and have not grown weary.”

“Yet, I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.”

“Those who have an ear, let them hear what the Spirit says to the Churches. To those who overcome, I will give the right to eat from the Tree of Life, which is in the paradise of God.”

“How gladly would I treat you like sons, and give you a desirable land, the most beautiful inheritance of any nation. I thought you would call me ‘Father,’ and not turn away from following Me. But like a woman unfaithful to her husband, so you have been unfaithful to Me. A cry is heard on the barren heights, the weeping and pleading of the people, because they have perverted their ways, and have forgotten the Lord their God. Return, faithless people, I will cure you.”



Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. I speak to sensible people, judge for yourself what I say (1 Cor. 10:14-15). Is not the task of the ear to discriminate between wise and unwise words, just as the mouth distinguishes between desirable and undesirable food (Job 12:11)? Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is it not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the One Loaf.

I do not want you to participate with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too. You cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons. Are we trying to arouse the Lord's jealousy? Are we stronger than He?

"Everything is permissible, but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible, but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek their own good; instead, be thoughtful and considerate to others (1 Cor. 10:16-24).

The Lord has prepared a table before us in the presence of our enemies (Ps. 23:5). Who have you invited to join you fear, anger, greed, gluttony, lust.....?



2.) Smyrna

Myrrh

To the angel of the Church of Smyrna write: These are the words of Him Who is the First and the Last, Who died and came to life again:

“I know your afflictions and your poverty – yet you are rich! I know the slander of those who say they are God’s people and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the Crown of Life.”

“Those who have an ear, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Those who overcome will not be hurt at all by the second death.”



“Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of Your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing You with the oil of joy. All Your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia; from palaces adorned with ivory, the music of the strings makes You glad.”

Rev. 2:8-11, Ps. 45:6-8

On coming to the house, they saw the Child with His mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped Him. Then they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route (Matt. 2:11-2).

What did the wise men's gifts symbolize?

Myrrh was commonly used as an anointing oil, frankincense as a perfume, and gold a valuable precious metal. The three gifts had a spiritual meaning: gold as a symbol of kingship on earth, frankincense (an incense) as a symbol of deity, and myrrh (an embalming oil) as a symbol of death.



3.) Pergamum

Height, Elevation

To the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These are the words of Him Who has the sharp, double-edged sword:

“I know where you live — where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to My name. You did not renounce your faith in Me, even in the days of Antipas, My faithful witness, who was put to death in your city — where Satan lives.”

“Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality. Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.”

“Those who have an ear, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To those who overcome, I will give some of

the hidden manna. I will also give them a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to those who receive it." Rev. 2:12-17



In all things we are more than conquerors through Him Who loves us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:37-39).

Let this be recorded for the generation yet unborn, that a people yet to be created shall praise the Lord. For He looked down from the height of His sanctuary, from heaven did the Lord behold the earth, to hear the sighing and groaning of the prisoner, to loose those who are appointed to death, so that people may declare the name of the Lord in Zion and His praise in Jerusalem, when they are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to worship and serve the Lord (Ps. 102:18-22 AMP), Who said to the boastful, 'Be not boastful,' and to the wicked, 'Raise not up a horn.'

Yes, raise not upon on high your horn (of pride speaking with a stiff neck and closed mind). For not from the east or from the west, nor from the wilderness is **elevation**; But God, He is judge, this He makes low and this He lifts up (Ps. 75:4-7 YLT).

Therefore, let those in humble circumstances, with a humble spirit, glory in their **elevation** as a Christian, called to the true riches and to be an heir of God. The rich person ought to glory in being humbled by being shown their human frailty, because like the flower of the grass they will pass away.

Blessed are those people who remain patient under trial and stand up under temptation, for when their faith have stood the test and been approved, they will receive the victor's crown of life, which God has promised to those who love Him.

Do not be misled, beloved, for no one when being tempted can say, I am tempted from God, for God is incapable of being tempted by what is evil and He Himself tempts no one to unite themselves to what is deceptive and destructive and deadly.

Every person is tempted when they are drawn away, enticed and baited by their own evil desires, lusts and passions. When their evil

desire is conceived it gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully matured brings forth death (James 1:9-16 AMP).

For in Jehovah's hand there is a cup of pale and sparkling wine. It is His judgment, poured out upon the wicked of the earth. They must drain that cup to the dregs. But as for me, I shall forever declare the praises of the God of Israel, Who says:

“I will cut off the strength of those who do what is evil, and increase the power of the righteous in their place.”

Ps. 75:8-10 TLB).



4.) Thyatira

Perfume, Sacrifice of Labor

To the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze:

“I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first.”

“Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads My servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways”.

“I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am He Who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds. Now I say to the rest of you who do not hold to her teaching, and have not learned Satan's so-called deep secrets (I will not impose any other burden on you): Only hold on to what you have until I come.”

“To those who overcome, and who does My will to the end, I will give authority over the nations —

For I AM the Son of God, the manifestation (essence, soul, embodiment) God's Word

'Who will rule them with an iron scepter;
Who will dash them to pieces like pottery'

Just as I have received authority from My Father. I will also give them the Morning Star."

"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to give you this testimony for the Churches. I AM the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star. The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let them who hear say, 'Come!' Whoever is thirsty, let them come! And whoever wishes, let them take the free gift of the Water of Life!"

"Yes, I am coming soon!"

"Those who have an ear let them hear what the Spirit says to the Churches."

Rev. 2:18-29, Rev. 22:16-20



While Jesus was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on the head of Jesus.

Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, "Why this waste of perfume? It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly. Jesus said:

"Leave her alone." "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to Me. The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have Me. She did what she could. She poured perfume on My body beforehand to prepare for My burial. I tell you the truth, wherever the Gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

Mark 14:3-9

God the Father has His eye on each of us, and has determined by the work of the Spirit to keep you obedient through the sacrifice of Jesus. May everything good from God be yours (1 Peter 1:2 Message)!



5.) Sardis

Prince of Joy

To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of Him Who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

“I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. Remember therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.”

“Yet you have a few people who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with Me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. Those who overcome will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out their name from the Book of Life, but will acknowledge their name before My Father and His angels. Those who have an ear let them hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.”



There is a river of joy flowing through the city of our God – the sacred home of the God above all gods. God Himself is living in that city; therefore it stands unmoved despite the turmoil everywhere. The Commander of the armies of heaven is here among us. He, the God of Jacob, has come to rescue us (Ps. 46:4-7 TLB).

For unto us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end (Isa. 9:6-7).

His eyes are like blazing fire, and on His head are many crowns. He has a name written on Him that no one knows but He Himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and His name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following Him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of His mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of

God Almighty. On His robe and on His thigh He has this name written:

KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS

(Rev. 19:12-16)



6.) Philadelphia

Love of a Brother

To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of Him Who is holy and true, Who holds the key of David. What He opens no one can shut, and what He shuts no one can open:

“I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept My word and have not denied My name.”

“I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be God’s people though they are not, but are liars — I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. Since you have kept My

command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.”

“I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. Those who overcome I will make a pillar in the temple of My God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from My God; and I will also write on them My new name. Those who have an ear, let them hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.”

Rev 3:7-13



When the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by His Holy Spirit, Whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:4-8).

Jesus said:

“You will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of Me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but those who stand firm to the end will be saved. And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”

Matt. 24:9-14



7.) Laodicea

Just People

To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Ruler of God's creation:

“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm — neither hot nor cold — I am about to spit you

out of My mouth. You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked."

"I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see."

"Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with them, and they with Me."

"To those who overcome, I will give the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. Those who have an ear, let them hear what the Spirit says to the Churches"

Rev. 3:14-22



There were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them —

bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the Way of Truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping (2 Peter 2:1-3).

But all you leaders and followers alike, are to be down to earth with each other, for God has had it with the proud, but takes delight in just plain people. So be content with who you are, and don't put on airs. God's strong hand is on you: He'll promote you at the right time. Live carefree before God; He is most careful with you (1 Peter 5:5-7 Message).

Let us rejoice and shout for joy [exulting and triumphant]! Let us celebrate and ascribe to Him glory and honor, for the marriage of the Lamb [at last] has come, and His bride has prepared herself.

She has been permitted to dress in fine (radiant) linen, dazzling and white – for the fine linen is (signifies, represents) the righteousness (the upright, just, and godly living, deeds, and conduct, and right standing with God) of the saints (God's holy people).

Then [the angel] said to me write this down: Blessed (happy, to be envied) are those who are summoned (invited, called) to the Marriage

Supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me [further]: These are the true words (the genuine and exact declarations) of God (Rev. 19:7-9).



So repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call (Acts 2:28-29).

For here on earth, on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, God-of-Angel-Armies will throw a feast for all the people of the world. And there on that mountain, God will banish the pall of doom hanging over all peoples, the shadow of doom darkening all nations.

Yes, He’ll banish death forever. And God will wipe the tears from every face. He’ll remove every sign of disgrace from His people, wherever they are. Yes! God says so!

Also at that time, people will say: Look at what’s happened! This is our God! We waited for Him and He showed up and saved us! This God, the One we waited for! Let’s celebrate, sing the joys of His salvation, God’s hand rests on Jerusalem! (Isa. 25:5-10 Message).



Look! The Lion from the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David's Tree has conquered (Rev. 5:5 Message). Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing! He has redeemed us to God by His blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and has made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-11 NKJV).

Yes, being found in appearance as a Man, Jesus humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8). Like sheep we have all gone astray, so Jesus Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we too might die to sin and live for righteousness.

God has given us time and opportunity to return to the Shepherd and Overseer of our soul, and know by His wounds we have been healed (1 Peter 2:24-25).

There was an oath regarding Jesus, for God said to Him:

“You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek”



Because of this oath, Jesus is the One Who guarantees this better covenant with God. There were many priests under the old system; however, death prevented them from remaining in office. Because Jesus lives forever, His priesthood will also last forever (Heb. 7:20-24).

Jesus will build the Temple of the Lord (Zech. 6:13a). Christ Himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in His own body on the cross, He broke down the wall of hostility that separated us.

Jesus did this by ending the system of law with its commandments and regulations. In Himself the Lord created one new people from the two groups. Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups by means of His death on the cross (Eph. 2:14-16 NLT).

And His reason? To show to all the rulers in heaven how perfectly wise

God is when all of His family – Jews and Gentiles alike – are seen to be joined together in His Church in just the way He had always planned through Jesus Christ our Lord (Eph. 3:10-12 TLB).

For Jesus is the Head of the body, the Church; He is the Beginning and the Firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything He might have the supremacy (Col. 1:18-19).



Like a lion He crouches and lies down, like a lioness – who dares to rouse Him? The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the Ruler’s staff from between His feet, and the obedience of the nations is His. He will tether His donkey to a vine, His colt to the choicest branch; He Who washed His garments in wine, His robes in the blood of grapes (Gen. 49:9-11).

Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey (Zech. 9:9). And the Lord has said:

“As the lion or the young lion growls over his prey – and though a large band of shepherds is called out against him, he will not be terrified at their voice or daunted at their noise – so the Lord of Hosts will come down to fight upon Mount Zion and upon its hills.”

“Like an eagle hovering, so will the Lord of Hosts defend Jerusalem; He will protect and deliver it, He will pass over and spare and preserve it, for His fire is in Zion and His furnace is in Jerusalem.”

“Return, O children of Israel, to Him against Whom you have
so deeply plunged into revolt. For in that day every one of you will cast away in contempt and disgust their idols of silver and their idols of gold, which your own hands have sinfully made for you.”

Isa. 31:4-9 AMP

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God is love (1 John 4:8)! We love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19)! Love isn't just merely an emotion. Love is the completeness, the complexity that characterizes the Truth Jesus shares with us:

“Why do you ask Me what is good? There is only One Who is good. If you want to enter life, obey God.”

“For God so loved the world! He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. I tell you the truth, no one can see the Kingdom of God unless they are born again.”

“I tell you the truth, no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.”

“I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by Himself, He can only do what He sees His Father doing.”

“I tell you the truth, whoever hears My Word and believes Him Who sent Me has eternal life and will not be condemned. They have crossed over from death to life.”

“I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps My Word, they will never see death.”

“I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in Me will do what I have been doing. They will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.”

“I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the Kingdom of God. For John came to show the way to righteousness, and the self-righteous did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did.”

“Listen to this parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.”

“The tenants seized his servants. They beat one, killed another and stoned a third. Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. Last of all he sent his son to them, ‘They will respect my son,’ he said.”

“But, when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him and take his inheritance.’ So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.”

“I tell you the truth, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor, Holy Spirit, will not come to you. But, if I go I will send Him to you. When He comes, He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment. In regard to sin, because people do not believe in Me. In regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see Me no longer. And, in regard to judgment because the prince of this world, now stands condemned.”

“I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son

belongs to the family forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

Matt. 19:17, John 3:16-17, John 3:5-6, John 5:19, John 5:24, John 8:51, John 14:12,
Matt. 21:31-39, John 16:7-11, John 8:34-36



To truly know Love a humble spirit is essential for how else would we possibly be able to show the proper respect that everyone deserves. Yes, God is love, but people love what appeals to them so you would think that respect would be a simple offer. Instead, there's that old adage “Respect must be earned.”

This just gives us permission to do what comes naturally being mean and thoughtless and disrespectful.

Paul wrote: This is what I have asked of God for you – that you will be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love, and that you will have the rich experience of knowing Christ with real certainty and clear understanding. For God's secret plan, now at last made known, is Christ Himself; in Him lie hidden all the mighty, untapped treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:2-3 TLB)!

So God challenges us to be as little children who desire to walk in their Father's footsteps. Now we each may have had such a desire, but for many reasons following those footprints were not an option. Especially when what is handed down is fear, and sometimes fear with an absence of good, but also tradition – those things that look and feel so good.

God gave man time to enjoy good with the absence of fear. However when respect for Him and His Word was diminished that's when fear began its rampage setting mankind on a course of violent and reckless action and behavior.



Rick Warren, Pastor of Saddleback Church, wrote: God encourages His followers to fear NOT 365 times in the Bible, one for each day of the year. God didn't intend for His children to spend their days preoccupied with anxiety and worry. God's repeated mentioning of the phrase "don't be afraid" is clear evidence that He didn't want human minds clouded by fear.

God's encouragement is especially evident in Psalm 23:4 which reads: Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for

you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. God wants His people to get the message: Stop worrying.

<https://www.christianpost.com/news/rick-warren-why-god-encourages-christians-to-fear-not-365-times-in-the-bible.html>

However there are many who believe as Job did: He knows where I am and what I've done. He can cross-examine me all He wants, and I'll pass the test with honors. I've followed Him closely, my feet in His footprints, not once swerving from His way. I've obeyed every word He's spoken, and not just obeyed His advice - I've treasured it.

But, He is singular and sovereign. Who can argue with Him? He does what He wants, when He wants to. He'll complete in detail what He's decided about me, and whatever else He determines to do. Is it any wonder that I dread meeting Him? Whenever I think about it, I get scared all over again. (Job 23:10-15 Message).

No wonder I'm so terrified in His presence. God has given me a fainting heart; He, the Almighty, has terrified me with darkness all around me, thick, impenetrable darkness everywhere (Job 23: 16-17 TLB).

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However, when Job did find himself before the Lord this is what he said: I am unworthy – how can I reply to You? I put my hand over my mouth. I spoke once, but I have no answer – twice, but I will say no more (Job 40:4-5).

Take a moment to consider: Have you had a “But for the grace of God” experience. The Book of Job reveals what the evil one would enjoy doing to each and everyone of us – the more pain and suffering and heartache the better. But, not only that we hear a voice testifying to how terrifying the thick, impenetrable darkness when God, all love and all good has been removed. God actually said to Satan:

“Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil.”

Job 1:8

Can someone sin and not know it? Yes! Even Christians! Sin is any offense against God, and even when we lack a full knowledge of what offends God or the self-awareness to recognize that our actions are offensive, nevertheless we are still acting in a way that offends Him.

Yet, God said Job was blameless, why? He was a God-fearing man who shunned evil.

In the Law given to Israel through Moses, the Lord described many requirements for the people of Israel. God told His people not to murder and not to commit adultery, but Jesus said that hating a person was equivalent to murder in the sense that it was a sin coming from a similar sinful heart. Likewise, lusting was equivalent to adultery.

<https://versebyverseministry.org/bible-answers/can-someone-sin-and-not-know-it>



Pastor Rick Warren said: We've all made mistakes. It's not just a 'you problem, it's a human problem.' Not only have you made mistakes in the past, but you'll also make more in the future. I guarantee it. Even playing it safe and refusing to take risks is a mistake.

You'll never get over your fear of failure until you fully accept the reality that you're not perfect. You've already failed many, many times in life. So have I. You're a failure in some area of your life right now. And you'll fail a lot more in the future.

While everyone experiences failure at some point in their life, those who are successful persevere despite their setbacks. Great people are simply ordinary people who have an extraordinary amount of determination. They just keep on going. They realize they're never a failure until they quit.

The Saddleback pastor has also addressed the topic of fear in his book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, writing that people can allow fear to control their lives, thus missing out on important opportunities.

<https://www.christianpost.com/news/rick-warren-why-god-encourages-christians-to-fear-not-365-times-in-the-bible.html>



Fear has caused us to develop many unhealthy tendencies:

- Caretaking
- Feeling responsible for solving other's problems
- Low Self-Worth
- Weak Boundaries
- Lack of Trust
- Control Issues
- Offering advice even if it isn't asked for
- Expecting others to do as you say

- Dependency
- People-Pleasing
- Obsession
- Anger
- Feeling used and under-appreciated
- Denial
- Repression
- Afraid to let yourself be who you are
- Poor communication regarding feelings, wants and needs
- Difficulty adjusting to change
- Difficulty making decisions

Are many of your relationships with troubled, needy or dependent people? In some area has your life become unmanageable?

Codependency is a universal problem because we are destined by birth to participate in relationships with people who have learned and developed ways of coping – some good, some not so good, and some down-right ugly.

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Throughout life we will come face-to-face with difficulty that makes the presence of fear known. But know, God has not given us the spirit of fear: but, of power and of love and of a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7 KJV). In fact Jesus said:

“I will show you whom you should fear. Fear Him Who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear Him.”

Luke 12:5

When our faith, respect and honor is placed in what we have come to believe about fear there will be astonishment and dread will surely follow. However, when our faith, respect and honor is given to God’s Word, Christ Jesus, there will also be astonishment at this discovery God gives fear a very different appearance.

When we trust and honor and obey God’s Word by possessing a spirit as Job did that fears the Lord and shuns evil, then we are truly drinking from the fountain of Life. Whatever fears we partake in dread (stress, anxiety, worry, distress, agitation, timidity, foreboding, uncertainty, misgiving...) will definitely be known.

Prov. 29:25 tells us: Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe. Definitely not safe to do whatever we desire because fear is dispensed by hands that are human.

The fear that is dispensed from the hands of the Lord flows as a fountain of life, turning people from the snares of death (Prov. 14:27). Through the Books of the Bible like Job we learn the fear in which we've known since childhood causes shame and guilt, anger and accusations to be directed outwards, but we can't prevent what it causes to develop within us.



We can stop being controlled by those fear-filled tendencies and behaviors by seeking knowledge of the Lord. For He will become the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge, and the fear of the Lord is the key to this treasure (Isa. 33:6).

My prayer is you too would experience as Job did as the Lord blesses the latter part of your life more than the first (Job 42:10). There are so many blessings God offers: Love, Kindness, Patience,

Forgiveness, Grace, Repentance...so be open-minded and willing to make amends to yourself:

DEAR YOUNGER ME

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-l70C3ePyIQ>

Dear younger me

Where do I start

If I could tell you everything that I have learned so far

Then you could be one step ahead

Of all the painful memories still running thru my head

I wonder how much different things would be

Dear younger me

Dear younger me

I cannot decide

Do I give some speech about how to get the most out of your life

Or do I go deep

And try to change

The choices that you'll make cuz they're choices that made me

Even though I love this crazy life

Sometimes I wish it was a smoother ride

Dear younger me, dear younger me

If I knew then what I know now
Condemnation would've had no power
My joy my pain would've never been my worth

If I knew then what I know now
Would've not been hard to figure out
What I would've changed if I had heard

Dear younger me
It's not your fault
You were never meant to carry this beyond the cross

Dear younger me

You are holy
You are righteous
You are one of the redeemed
Set apart a brand new heart
You are free indeed

Every mountain every valley
Thru each heartache you will see
Every moment brings you closer
To who you were meant to be
Dear younger me, dear younger me

You are holy
You are righteous
You are one of the redeemed
Set apart a brand new heart
You are free indeed

And I know that your heart was aching
I know that you put up a fight
For making it through all the breaking
Now you feel alive

If I could tell you everything I know now
I'd tell you that the darkness always fades out
In the end, the light will emerge with no doubt
You just gotta keep going, don't back down

If I could tell you everything I know now
I'd tell you that the darkness always fades out
In the end, the light will emerge with no doubt
You just gotta keep going, baby, don't back down

Song by Mercy Me



Stop clinging to fear! What you focus on, you empower! Tell yourself: I will remember the works of the Lord! Yes, I will remember His wonders of old. I will reflect on all He has done, and ponder on His mighty deeds.

The ways of God are holy. What god is so great as our God? He is the God Who works wonders; He displays His strength among the people. With power He redeemed His people, the children of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

The waters saw You, O God; the waters saw You and swirled; even the depths were shaken. The clouds poured down water; the skies resounded with thunder; Your arrows flashed back and forth. Your thunder resounded in the whirlwind; the lightning lit up the world; the earth trembled and quaked.

Your path led through the sea, Your way through the mighty waters, but Your footprints were not to be found. You led Your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron (Ps. 77:11-20 BSB).



God sent His Son to leave His footprints not only here on earth; but, that their impression might also be made upon our heart. Only God could accomplish what He did in those three years through His Word so the righteous would be as bold as a lion (Prov. 28:1).

Yes, Jesus has made it possible for us to come fearlessly right into God's presence, assured of His glad welcome when we come with Christ (Eph. 3:12 TLB).

By following the Lord and speaking God's Word of Truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, that is, Christ Jesus. From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work (Eph. 4:15-16).

In Jesus we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that He lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding (Eph. 1:7-8). Though we were once alienated from God and were enemies in our minds because of our evil behavior, God has reconciled us by Christ (Col. 1:21-22).

Jesus brought this Good News of peace to the Gentiles who were far away from Him, and peace to the Jews who were near. Now we all can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us (Eph. 2:17-18 NLT).



Through the Gospel the Gentiles are made heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus (Eph. 3:6); Who has received royal honor and rules as King from His throne; however, He also serves as Priest from His throne, and there will be perfect harmony between His two roles (Zech. 6:13b NLT).

Therefore, Jesus is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through Him. He lives forever to intercede with God on our behalf. He is the kind of High Priest we need because He is holy and blameless, unstained by sin.

Jesus has been set apart from sinners, and has been given the highest place of honor in heaven. He has been made the perfect High Priest forever offering Himself as the sacrifice for the people's sins once for

all introducing a better hope, by which we draw near to God. (Heb. 7:19b,24-28 NLT).



Yes, with hope we can draw near to God, for it is as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure, for it enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, Who went before us, has entered on our behalf (Heb. 6:19-20), and through Him we have access by one Spirit to the Father (Eph. 2:18 NKJV).

For what the law of Moses was powerless to do because it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending His own Son, and so He condemned sin in sinful man. He did this so the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied in those, who no longer follow their sinful nature but instead follow Holy Spirit.

Letting our sinful nature control our mind leads to death, for it is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's Word and laws, and it never will because those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things. Those whom Holy Spirit empowers think about things that please the Spirit. Anyone who is still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God (Rom. 8:3-8 NLT).



Robert Hampshire wrote: No matter what we wanted to be when we grew up and no matter what we are today, who we really are can never be boiled down to something as trite as what we do, where we are from or even what we think about ourselves.

Instead, our identity is more about “whose” we are – meaning if we are a Christian then our identity comes from our relationship with God. This is important because who we think we are determines how we live our life.

So, we need to know that we were made in God’s image, we have been made children of God through Christ, and we have been empowered by Holy Spirit.

But, among those descriptions of our Christian identity, being empowered by Holy Spirit seems to be the most confusing and even contentious to many believers.

However, what God makes available, discoveries like this one: Instead of Holy Spirit making the Christian life better, He makes the Christian

life possible. Without the Spirit of God, we cannot even come close to living the life that God has called us to.

Information taken from the article, “How are Believers Empowered by Holy Spirit?”

<https://www.christianity.com/wiki/holy-spirit/how-are-believers-empowered-by-the-holy-spirit.html>



Andrew W. Roebert wrote: How often we live our lives in our own strength. We run around doing what seems good to us and in the process we get exhausted, tired, stressed, pressurized, weak, depressed and worn out.

I know a lady who carried so much with her. One day I spoke to her and asked her how she handled the weight of the burden she carried in life? She retorted by saying: I’ve got broad shoulders.

Many of us have this ‘broad-shoulder approach’ and we are sure we can handle whatever comes our way. This is great, until one day, when things just get too much and we need help. It is then that we discover that we need God and His strength in our lives. The Bible tells us we

are 'earthen vessels.' This means that we are not as strong as we think we are and we need God more than we realize.

I heard someone make the following statement: Everything we do in our own strength wears us down, everything we do through God's strength - enables, strengthens, builds us up!



Power is the capacity to effect (do) something!

1. THE POWER OF GOD IS AVAILABLE TO US

Romans 8:11 says: And if the Spirit of Him Who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, then He Who raised up Christ Jesus from the dead will also restore to life your mortal (short-lived, perishable) bodies through His Spirit Who dwells in you.

With God, we have the capacity, ability, endurance and perseverance to be able to really have an effect. This verse tells us the same power that raised Jesus from the dead can live in us. In addition this power that is available to us will come and restore life to our physical bodies and inner healing to our soul.

When this happens everything changes. We are no longer the same. Our lives and the way we live our lives changes. We are no longer running on our own strength. We can switch over to His power in our lives.

2. WE CAN KNOW HIS POWER IN OUR LIVES

His power can be 'at work' within us. We can experience His power in our lives. We can live, behave and walk in this dimension on a daily basis.

1 Cor. 6:14 says: And God both raised the Lord to life and will also raise us up by His power.

Eph. 3:20 assures us: Now to Him Who, by the action of His power that is at work within us, is able to carry out His purpose and do superabundantly, far above and above all that we dare ask or think infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes or dreams.

God's power is at work within us. He often uses what we are going through to bring about His purposes. We must not resist

His working in our lives, but we must embrace it. God's power wants to bring us through any current difficulties and challenges to a place where He wants us to be. God has great things in store, things that are super-abundant, far above what we could ask or think.

3. HIS POWER MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

His power gives us what we need!

2 Pet. 1:3 says: His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by glory and virtue.

We can only go so far in our own strength. Sooner or later we will need His Power. Life can be like quicksand. It can swallow us up and the devil wants this to happen. We can struggle and fight this in our own strength and end up sinking even further. But, when God's Power comes into play we can overcome and come out on top.

One day I saw an old western movie, and the hero landed in an area of quicksand. As he struggled to keep from sinking, he kept sinking further in, until all that was out of the mud was his head. Then along came someone on a horse and threw him a rope and the horse began to pull and slowly he emerged effortlessly out of the mud. All he had to do was to hold on to the rope and the power of the horse worked in his situation and brought him back to life, from a sure death.

4. GOD IS THE ULTIMATE SOURCE OF ALL POWER (STRENGTH)

Eph. 1:19-20 says: And so that you can know and understand what is the immeasurable and unlimited and surpassing greatness of His power in and for those who believe, as demonstrated in the working of His mighty strength, which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.

In a sense we have to come to the end of ourselves, to the point where we realize that we need God totally. At this point we get

to a place of 'desperate dependence' as opposed to 'partial dependence' (or Codependence).

When we live our lives without this 'desperate dependence,' we live life standing on a banana peel, ready to slip when the next hurdle comes our way. Often we look everywhere but to God for our strength.

We will look to others, to our ability and skill, to our qualifications and career, to our finances and resources, to our beauty or strength when we need to be looking to God. All these things have the capacity to let us down – they are not sure things. But God and His power is what we can completely depend on. Don't look to other places for your strength and happiness, look to God and find your peace in Him.

5. WE HAVE NO POWER APART FROM GOD!

There is a song: I HAVE NO POWER OF MY OWN!

John 15:5 shares what Jesus said:

"I am the Vine; you are the branches.

Whoever lives in Me and I in them
Bears much fruit
However, apart from Me
You can do nothing!"

We have to stay vitally connected to God. Our strength flows from God as we remain connected to Him. If we cut ourselves off we will last for a while, but ultimately we will run out of strength. Often when people face difficulty they get disappointed with God and become disillusioned and turn to their own ways. We must learn to hold onto God and realize we need Him and His power in our lives to bring us out on top.

6. HOLY SPIRIT IS THE KEY!

The song goes on: I have no power of my own – Holy Spirit come and help me realize I have no power of my own!

Acts 1:8 records what Jesus said:

“But you will receive power
When Holy Spirit comes on you;

And you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem,
And in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth!”

Holy Spirit makes this all possible. It is for this reason that we so desperately need Him. Before Holy Spirit fell on the disciples they were scared, timid and cowards (so much for their own strength), but after Holy Spirit came upon them they were bold, fearless and courageous even in the face of opposition, threat and death!

We need Holy Spirit in every aspect of our lives. We must invite Him and give Him right of way in our lives. Some years back Phil Driscoll wrote a song and the words went: Welcome Holy Spirit. I am in Your presence, fill me with Your power. Move inside of me.

This needs to be our cry as well!

**7. IT'S TIME TO STEP UP INTO A NEW REALM OF LIFE AND
WALK IN THE POWER OF HOLY SPIRIT!**

Rom. 6:4 says: Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, so we too might habitually live and behave and walk in newness of life!

There is another dimension of life to which we should arise. It is a newness of life into which we must step as we realize and take hold of the power and strength of God that is available to each of us.

I believe that God wants us to live on an ongoing basis, habitually, as it were addicted to this aspect of God. As a result, it should affect our lives, our behavior and walk and we will never be the same! Are you ready to step up to and into this newness of life, where we depend on His power and not on our own?

Information taken from the notes "Empowered by God," that were posted on the website Alive to God.

<https://alivetogod.com/notes/empowered-by-god>



By taking that first step reaching for God's book we have placed ourselves in a position to prosper (flourish, thrive, succeed). The Bible

is like a spiritual bank with Holy Spirit as its Broker dispensing revelatory nuggets of gold in exchange for time personally invested so He can empower us to live clothed with the power and authority of Jesus, giving all glory to our heavenly Father.

Seeking knowledge of God has accomplished so much good in my life, much of which can only be described as miraculous. Step-by-step Holy Spirit has led me from the debilitating ranks of fear into the exhilarating realms of Love's glory, from the banks of ignorance into flowing waters of understanding, from spiritual apathy to the fervency of faith, from weakness of character to the strength of conviction, from bankruptcy to prosperity as my soul has surely prospered (3 John 2).

I encourage you to remain humble, and continue taking new steps to seek a deeper, more intimate relationship with God. Continue to put into practice the principles for taking these new steps toward renewal and recovery every day so you too will become more God-dependent instead of Co-Dependent.

- The first key is to maintaining an honest view of reality not only considering particular circumstances and events as substantial, but recognizing the substance of Truth – the Life, the Alpha and Omega,

the heart and the spirit as we work on taking steps of faith remembering:

- God exists and I matter to Him – God could and would if He were sought
- Admitting I am powerless – If God is your co-pilot, switch seats
- Acknowledging in certain areas my life became unmanageable – Sorrow shared is halved; Joy shared is doubled
- Believing God will restore me with Love, a Sound Mind and Power – Success means getting your BUT out of the way
- Believing God will help me stay committed to this decision to put all of who I am into His possession and safekeeping – There is no magic in this process of renewal and recovery only miracles
- Believing the Word of God will encourage, support and strengthen me as I make a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself – There is pain in this process. Misery is optional
- Because of God’s loving-kindness I have become willing to admit to God, to myself and another person the exact nature of my wrongs – The road to resentment is paved with expectation

- With Truth as my solid foundation I have become entirely ready to have God remove all my defects of character -
Courage is faith that has said its prayers
- Having received faith and hope and love for the Surety God has given I humbly ask Him to remove my shortcomings -
F.A.I.T.H. = Fantastic Adventure In Trusting Him
- Having gained knowledge and insight and understanding I have become willing to make a list of anyone I have harmed, and to make an amends to them all - Just for today I will try to live through this day only, and not tackle my whole life problems at once
- Having gained confidence and trust in God's refuge I have become willing to step out with the mindset I am doing this with God and for His glory to make my amends whenever possible unless to do so would cause injury to others -
Remembering nothing is going to happen today that you and God can't handle
- I embrace my covenant relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit by continuing to take a personal moral inventory, and when I am wrong being prompt to admit it - We are not human beings having spiritual experiences; we are spiritual beings having human experiences

- I invest in my relationship with God by communicating through prayer and meditation to improve my conscious contact with Him seeking knowledge of His will and the power of grace to carry that out – If God seems far away, who moved?
- I seek Revival, Restoration and Reconciliation, a spiritual awakening, as a result of taking steps to carry God’s message to others and to practice these principles in all my affairs – Worry is a conversation you have with yourself about things you cannot change. Prayer is conversation you have with God about things He can change



Such a miraculous occurrence when Holy Spirit came upon Mary impregnating her with the seed of God; for now His Word of Truth can birth a newness of Life, a Christian, to glory in what Christ Jesus has done for us, realizing that we are helpless to save ourselves (Phil. 3:3 TLB).

Yes, the miraculous is ever-occurring for Holy Spirit continues to impregnate willing individuals with God’s Seed, His Word, so we can be born into the love of God, Who has been, currently is and always will be personally invested in us.

So give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in Whom we have faith because of the hope which is laid up for us in heaven.

You heard of this hope in the Gospel, God's Word of Truth, which has come to us and is bringing forth the fruit of the Spirit: love, peace, joy, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, patience and self-control (Gal. 5:22), as He is also doing in all the world so we each can become faithful ministers of Christ (Col. 1:3-7 NKJV).

For we know that when Jesus appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is (1 John 3:2). We know that it was not with perishable things such as silver and gold that we were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to us by our forefathers.

No! We were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, a Lamb without blemish or defect. Through Him we believe in God, Who raised Him from the dead and glorified Him, and so our faith and hope can rest in God (1 Peter 1:18-21).

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Everyone who has this faith and hope in God purifies themselves, just as He is pure (1 John 3:3). How? We purify ourselves by standing firm in our faith in God not ourselves or someone else or especially fear.

We purify ourselves by obeying God's Word of Truth as James said: I will show you my faith by my works (vs 18 NKJV) that bring glory to the Lord. We purify ourselves so that we have sincere love for our brethren (1 Peter 1:22).

Yes, praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (1 Peter 3:3). We have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God (1 Peter 1:23). We have been given birth into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade, which is being kept in heaven for us.

Through our faith in Jesus, we are shielded by God's power until the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Peter 1:4).

Therefore, if anyone desires to claim credit, claim it for God. What we say about ourselves means nothing in God's work. It's what God says about us that makes the difference (2 Cor. 10:17-18 Message).



In all of this we can greatly rejoice,
Though now for a little while
We may suffer grief in all kinds of trials.
These come so that our faith –
Of greater worth than gold,
Which perishes, even though refined by fire –
May be proven genuine and may result in
Praise, glory, honor and thanksgiving
When Jesus is revealed

1 Peter 1:6-7

This precious gift of faith given to us by God equips us so we can be sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see (Heb. 11:1). Oh! That the world will look upon Zion, the body of Christ, as a peaceful abode where God has set His people, Jew and Gentile alike, to be as tents that will not be moved.

That the faith and hope and love that God has bestowed becomes for us stakes that will never be pulled up. Yes, a cord of three strands –

faith, hope and love – would become for each tent housing God within, a rope that will never be broken (Isa. 33:20).



Let us therefore hold unswervingly to the priceless gifts of faith and hope in which we profess, for the Eternal God: El Olam (the Everlasting God), El Kannah (Jealous God), Jehovah Mekoddishkem (the Lord Who Sanctifies You), Who promised – is, El Emunah, the Faithful God (Heb. 10:23).

And there, in the body of Christ, the Lord, Jehovah Izuz Wegibbor, will be our Strong and Mighty One. The Church will be like a place of broad rivers and streams. For the Lord, Jehovah Hashopet, is our Judge, the Lord, Jehovah 'Emeth, is our Truth-Giver, the Lord, Jehovah Melech Olam, is our King; it is Jehovah Moshiekh Who saves us (Isa. 30:21a-22).

These three remain forever: El Agapao “God of Love” and “El Tikvah “God of Hope,” and El 'Emuwnah “ God of Faithfulness. To love is the greatest (1 Cor. 13:12) because God is Love (1 John 4:8).

Love comes from God, and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows Him. This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him.

This is Love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Since God so love us, we should honor Him by showing love (respect, appreciation and consideration) to one another (1 John 4:7-11).



Let the world be assured of this: God has made Jesus, Who was crucified, both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36). Why would we call Jesus, 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what He says (Luke 6:46)? Many have accepted this reliable and worthy saying: The living God, Christ Jesus, is the Savior of all mankind, especially of those who believe, trust in, rely on and adhere to Him (1 Tim. 4:9-10 AMP).

Sadly, many of us continue to shoot ourselves in the foot by living double-minded lives professing: Lord, You are my refuge and my shield. But, these worldly things remain: the cravings and lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1 John 2:16).

There may be hope in God's Word (Ps. 119:113-114), but faith seems lacking for what is learned and received and heard isn't being put into practice (Phil. 4:9). Yes, there are lists of 365 Scriptures 'Fear Not,' one for every day of the year. The Lord has told us:

"Do not fear, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

Isa. 41:10

It is God's Word that supports and strengthens us, but when trouble comes there is discouragement (Job 4:4-5).



There is grumbling and faultfinding causing many to follow their own evil desires (Jude 16). God's Word is not obeyed – stay away from complaining and grumbling and arguing (Phil. 2:14).

There are words being spoken that are not in agreement with the sound instruction of the Lord Christ Jesus and His godly teaching (1 Tim. 6:3), which makes it possible for us to rise above and look past negativity so we can be honest, merciful and patient.

We can look beyond our circumstances and see Faith and Hope and Love so we can rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment; but doing so with great caution, hating the sins that contaminate their lives (Jude 22-23 NLT). Words of conceit, of fear, envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions and those that cause friction reveal a lack of understanding, a mind corrupted, robbed of the Truth (1 Tim. 6:3-5).

How many Christians are living and experiencing dry, desert like conditions (Ps. 106:25-26) because they are grumbling about circumstance, not obeying God's Word of Truth, of Life that teaches a more excellent Way – one of Faith (that frees us of doubt, disbelief and confusion) – of Hope (that removes from us the weight of pessimism, despair and discouragement) – and the greatest of Love (that drives out fear, hatred and condemnation) (1 Cor. 12:31).

Following God's Word, Christ Jesus, means we must come out from among those (2 Cor. 6:17a) who are gratifying the cravings of their sinful nature by following its desires and thoughts, making themselves objects of God's wrath (Eph. 2:3), to live clean, innocent lives as children of God in this dark world.

We are not to remain crooked and stubborn; instead, we must be willing and able to hold the Word of Life out to others (Phil. 2:14-16) so Truth can be understood, a godly Life chosen.



Those who do not fear the wrath of the enemy, possibly may not even believe there is an adversary misunderstand by saying: Our hand is high; it is not the Lord Who has done all this. They are void of counsel, nor is there any understanding in them. Oh, that they were wise, that they understood and would consider their latter end (NKJV)!

How could one soldier chase a thousand enemies off, or two men run off two thousand, unless their Rock had sold them, unless God had given them away? For their rock is nothing compared to our Rock; even our enemies say that (Message).

Their vine is of the vine of Sodom and of the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter. Their wine is the poison of serpents and the cruel venom of cobras. Vengeance and recompense are the Lord's. The day of their calamity is at hand, and the things to come hasten upon them. The Lord will judge His people and have compassion on His servants.

Where are their gods, the rocks they fled to for refuge? Let those gods arise and help them. Let them provide their shelter. Look now there is no other god than the God of Heaven's Armies, and no one can be rescued from His powerful hand! As surely as He lives, when He sharpens His flashing sword, and begins to carry out justice, He will take revenge on His enemies and repay those who reject Him (NLT) (Deut. 32:27-41).



Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters. Listen, listen to God's Word of Truth, and eat what is good. Your soul will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to God's Word of Life, hear Him that your soul may live. He will make an everlasting covenant with you (Isa. 55:1-3).

Seek the Lord while you can find Him. Call on Him now while He is near. Let the wicked change their ways and banish the very thought of doing wrong. Let them turn to the Lord that He may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for He will forgive generously.

His thoughts are nothing like our thoughts, and His ways are far beyond anything we could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so His ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts higher than our thoughts.

He sends out His Word, and always fruit is produced. God's Word accomplishes all that He wants, and prospers everywhere it is sent so you can live in joy and peace (Isa. 55:6-12 NLT). For the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy (Rev. 19:10).



Come out not to face destruction; instead come out to Him, the living Stone - rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to Him - that you also may become like living stones being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ Jesus. For in Scripture God has said:

“See, I lay a Stone in Zion,
A chosen and precious Cornerstone,
And the one who trusts in Him
Will never be put to shame.”

Now to those who believe, this Stone is precious, but to those who do not believe,

“This Stone the builders rejected
Has become the Capstone.
A Stone that causes people to stumble
And a Rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they don't heed the message of God's Word (1 Peter 2:4-8).



So come, lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord (Ps. 116:13). Rejoice with Him, you heavens, and let all of God's angels worship Him. Rejoice with His people, you nations, be strengthened in Him. For He will avenge the blood of His servants; He will take revenge against His enemies. He will repay those who hate Him and cleanse the land for His people (Deut. 32:43-44 NLT).

Those who are the temple of the living God, Who said:

“I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be My people.”

2 Cor. 6:16

Yes, God will live and walk with those who turn away from everything wrong, whether of body or spirit, to purify themselves by living in the wholesome fear of God, giving themselves to Him alone perfecting holiness out of worship and reverence for our heavenly Father (2 Cor. 7:1-2 TLB).

God is living and walking with those who no longer are living to please selfish desires; instead, to please God – Who, when we were dead in transgressions, made us alive with Christ. Through **faith**, a supernatural gift of God, we are given the privilege to proclaim we are saved by grace. **Faith** that’s certain God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.

Faith that seeks understanding so God might show the incomparable riches of His grace (Eph. 2:3-7a). **Faith** not opposed to science for God set out His entire creation as a science classroom (Job 35:11 Message).

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For the heavens declare the glory of God. The skies proclaim the work of His hands (Ps. 18:1). So we would seek the Truth about God because He has made it obvious, for ever since the world was created people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see His invisible qualities – His eternal power and divine nature. People have no excuse for not knowing God (Rom. 1:19-20 NLT).

God's gift of **faith** is necessary for salvation so no one can boast about man-made wisdom or theories or philosophies. It is by God's grace we are saved. Grace enables **faith** because our works, our human effort, cannot save us. **Faith** the beginning of eternal life, for God is creating us anew in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:10).

Our Good Shepherd, Who leads us beside still waters. Who restores our soul so we can receive God's goodness and mercy, that will follow us all the days of our lives, and give us entrance to dwell in the house of the Lord forever (Ps. 23:1-3,6).



Jesus assured us:

“No servant can serve two masters, for either they will hate the one and love the other, or else they will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon,”

Luke 16:13

God’s economy is **faith**. First Timothy 1:4 tells us not to give importance to or occupy ourselves with legends and endless genealogies, which foster and promote useless speculations and questionings rather than acceptance in **faith** of God’s administration (authority, power, sovereignty) and the divine training that is in **faith** – in that leaning the entire human personality on God in absolute trust and confidence (AMP).

There are many who don’t worship the ever Living God (Rom. 1:23a), Who determines the number of the stars, and calls them each by name (Ps. 147:4). Instead, they worship and glorify themselves by claiming to be wise. They are unaware of the foolishness in the thoughts and ideas they have of what God is like. As a result, their minds become dark and confused (Rom. 1:21-22).

Instead of giving all glory to the Lord, Who is great and mighty in power

with understanding that has no limit (Ps. 147:5), they worship idols made to look like the creatures God created (Rom. 1:23).



Our pride-filled nature causes all mankind to sin (to miss the mark of God's righteousness), and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:22). The glory of God is the beauty of His Spirit. Beauty that emanates from His character, from all that He is - His holiness, faithfulness, mercy, grace, love, majesty, sovereignty, power, omniscience...to name a few.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/glorify-God.html>

The word glory as related to God in the Old Testament bears with it the idea of greatness of splendor. The Glory of the Lord looked like a consuming fire on top of the mountain (Ex. 24:17). In the New Testament, the word translated "glory" means "dignity, honor, praise and worship."

God's glory is the essence of His nature, and we give glory to Him by recognizing that essence. Acknowledging His greatness and giving Him honor by praising and worshiping Him, primarily because He

and He alone, deserves to be praised, honored and worshiped. Taken from the website Apply God's Word, AGW, The Teaching Ministry of Mark Ballenger.

<https://applygodsword.com/what-is-the-glory-of-god-according-to-the-bible/>

Kenneth Copeland wrote the glory of God isn't just a feeling, an event or an Old Testament experience – it's a spiritual tsunami of everything contained in the character of God.

The word glory is literally translated "heavy weight," meaning the heaviest, biggest, grandest thing about someone. The glory of God has been called the manifested presence of God, but more than just a presence it's power. The kind of power that resurrects, delivers, overcomes and transforms. It is greater and stronger than any other power in existence. It is given to us! <https://blog.kcm.org/4-ways-tap-glory-god/>



Scripture tells us the secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow the Word of God (Deut. 29:29). In Genesis 3:22 God said:

“The man has now become like one of Us,

Knowing good and evil.”

What a sorrowful day when the devil was able to depress the keys of evil as a keyboard so ears would be dulled to the melodies of Promise.

I don't believe for a minute Adam and Eve intentionally broke their commitment to God. Actually I believe in their child-like innocence they wanted to be like their Father, the God of Justice and Truth and Righteousness.

Sadly, they found themselves hiding from their heavenly Father, because sin had caused the secret things of evil – pride and fear and death - not just to become known but to be our personal experience.



David Jeremiah wrote on his blog, <https://davidjeremiah.blog/what-does-the-bible-say-about-gods-promises/> - Intentional or not, our broken commitments can taint our understanding of God's promises. And according to 2 Peter 1:4, God hasn't just given us promises, He has given us “exceedingly great and precious promises.”

They communicate His power and sustain our faith. They lift our gaze from the challenges we face to God's infinite love and His endless supply of grace. By revealing what is possible, what has already been promised to us in God's Word, they equip us to confront life's obstacles with unshakeable confidence, and God's promises cannot be broken.

As a result, we were distanced from the intimate knowledge and experiences God Himself shared with man - Love and Grace and a very different Life - one of compassion and power and peace of mind to remain calm and disciplined and self-controlled (2 Tim. 1:7 AMP). Distanced by the one who spoke the lie which they chose to believe:

You will not surely die, for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God (Gen. 3:4-5).



Though blame is used to avert attention, Truth always draws our focus to those fingers that point back at self. The negativity in my thoughts and feelings, opinions and beliefs carried me deeper into darkness where discouragement and despair and depression are always waiting to smother what is good - faith, hope, love...

My faith was deeply rooted in fear. Fear causes us to doubt ourselves and others and even God. Yes, my fears were many: fear of being rejected, fear of being abandoned, fear of failure, fear of being unlovable, fear of being inadequate...

God's Word of Truth cuts right to the chase:

"I tell you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you Whom you should fear: Fear Him Who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear Him; for fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe."

Luke 12:4-5, Prov. 29:25

James 1:6 tells us we must believe and not doubt, because those who doubt are like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. They are double-minded, unstable in all they do. How can they expect to receive all the goodness God wants to share with them?

So I write about God and His Word and about our human condition so we can learn and grow. With understanding of God's Word, our

thoughts and opinions can be altered for the Truth the Lord Christ Jesus speaks will calm our emotions even in the worst conditions.

I hope you feel as I do, to know awe and amazement now, for what we receive from God is so very rewarding. Yes, a much better experience than one of shock and dismay on that future day when God reveals all He had planned to give you.



In the first chapter of John we're told, Jesus is the Word Who was with God in the beginning. The Word, Jesus Christ, is God, and through Him all things were made. In Jesus, in the Word, is Life, which is the Light of men.

The Light shines in the darkness (John 1:1-5) in the shadows and crevices of our hearts revealing where we hide doubt and disbelief, ignorant, foolish and stubborn opinions, attitudes, ungodly desires, deceptions, error, unforgiveness, resentment, vindictiveness, denial, shame, guilt...

The question is do we believe God's Word?

“Fear not for you will not be put to shame! Don’t feel humiliated, for you will not be disgraced; instead, you will forget the shame of your youth, and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more.”

“For your Maker is your Husband – the Lord Almighty is His name – the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; He is called Jehovah Adon Kol Ha-arets, the Lord, the Lord of all the earth. The Lord will call you back as if you were a wife deserted and distressed in spirit – a wife who married young, only to be rejected.”

Isa 54:4-6



God in His mercy has given us the Way, the Truth and the Life, a new way, so we never give up. So we can reject all shameful deeds and underhanded methods. We don't try to trick anyone or distort the Word of God. We tell the truth before God, and all who are honest know this.

If the Good News we preach is hidden behind a veil, it is hidden only from people who are perishing. Satan, who is the god of this world,

has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious Light of the Good News. They don't understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.

You see, we don't go around preaching about ourselves. We preach that Jesus Christ is Lord, and we ourselves are your servants for Jesus' sake. For God said:

"Let there be Light in the darkness"

And, He has made this Light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus.

We now have this Light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves (2 Cor. 4:1-7 NLT).

God has given us Life and Truth and the Way to receive faith and hope and love, so we could know and believe and trust:

“Instead of our shame we will have a double portion, and instead of humiliation we will shout for joy over our portion.

Therefore, we will possess a double portion in the land of the living, and everlasting joy will be ours.”

Isa 61:7



When you were stuck in your old sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. But God, for He brought you alive – right along with Christ! Think of it! All sins forgiven, the slate wiped clean, the old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ’s cross (Col. 2:13-14 Message).

So count yourself dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Don’t let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.

Don’t offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourself to God, as people who have been brought from death to Life, and offer the parts of your body to Him as instruments of righteousness. Under grace sin no longer has to be your master.

For you are a slave to the one whom you obey – whether Evil, which enslaves you to sin so you will be lead in the chains of disbelief to

death, or Good, Who leads you in faith to obedience, to righteousness, to Life eternal. I put this in human terms because we are weak in our natural selves.



For just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, now offer them to righteousness. When you are a slave to sin, you are free from the influence of righteousness. What benefit is reaped from the things you are ashamed of? Those things result in death.

Through your faith in Jesus, God sets you free from sin to serve Him, and the result is eternal life; for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:11-23).

So Listen! Listen carefully! Don't stay stuck in your ways! It's God's Message we're dealing with here. Let your life glow bright before God before He turns out the lights. The light you always took for granted will go out, and the world will turn black (Jer. 13:15-16 Message).

Yet, there are many who say they know the score. Believing they are proud owners of God's revelation. Look where it's gotten them - stuck

in illusion. Their religious experts have taken them for a ride! Those know-it-alls will be unmasked, caught and shown up for what they are. They know everything but God's Word. Do you call that knowing (Jer. 8:8-9 Message)?



Let's talk about the seven reasons we get "Stuck" in the process of life and the process of our renewal and recovery

1.) We have not completely worked the previous eight principles that have been based on Christ's sermon on the Mount when He spoke of the beatitudes:

❖ Realize I'm not God; I admit that I am powerless to control my tendencies to do the wrong thing and that my life in some way has become unmanageable

"Happy are those who know that they are spiritually poor"

Matt. 5:3a

❖ Earnestly believe that God exists, that I matter to Him and that He has the power to help me recover and receive

“Happy are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted”

Matt. 5:4

- ❖ Consciously choose to commit all my life and will to Christ’s care and control

“Happy are the meek”

Matt. 5:5a

- ❖ Openly examine and confess my faults to myself, to God and to someone I trust

“Happy are the pure in heart”

Matt. 5:8a

- ❖ Voluntarily submit to any and all changes God wants to make in my life and humbly ask Him to remove my character defects

“Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires.”

Matt. 5:6a

- ❖ Evaluate all my relationships. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm I’ve done to others

when possible, except when to do so would harm them or others

“Happy are the merciful”

Matt. 5:7a

- ❖ Reserve a daily time with God for self-examination, Bible reading and prayer in order to know God and His will for my life and to gain the power to follow His will
- ❖ Yield myself to God to be used to bring this Good News to others, both by my example and my words

“Happy are those who are persecuted because they
Do what God requires”

Matt. 5:10

Celebrate Recovery’s Eight (Renewal) and Recovery Principles



1.) When these Principles are not completely worked

- Perhaps you are trying to move through the steps too quickly
- SLOW DOWN

- Give God time to work
- Just moving forward isn't always progress
- Remember, this is a journey of renewal and recovery not a destination
- Gal. 5:25 says, "Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit"
- Take your time with each step
- Work it to the best of your ability
- Many people can get lost trying to find an easier route for the straight and narrow

2.) You Have Not Completely Surrendered Your Life and Your Will to The Lord

- The first thing we needed to do was to ask Jesus Christ into our hearts as our Higher Power
- The second is to seek to follow His will for our lives in all our decisions
- It is possible you are trying to trust Jesus with the "Big" things, but you are still trusting yourself to handle the "Small" things
- Prov. 3:5-6 tells us, "For good judgment and common sense, trust in the Lord completely; don't ever trust in yourself. In

everything you do, put God first, and He will direct and crown your efforts with success”

➤ Ask yourself:

- What part of my life am I still holding on to
- What areas of my life am I withholding from God
- What don't I trust Him with

3.) You Have Not Accepted Jesus' Work on the Cross for Your Forgiveness

- You may have forgiven others, but continue to think your sin is too big to be forgiven
- First John 1:9 tells us, “If we confess our sins to Him, He can be depended on to forgive us, and cleanse us from every wrong”
- EVERY WRONG
- Not just some of our wrongs, but all of them
- Your sins are not that special, aren't that different from what God has forgiven of others
- Eph. 1:7 says, “So overflowing is His kindness towards us that He took away all our sins through the blood of His Son, by Whom we are saved”
- This verse says “All our sins” Past, Present and Future

- The question may be, “Have you forgiven yourself”
- This is what God wants you to do with the darkness of your past, “Come now, let us reason together. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool,” Isaiah 1:18
- Remember, “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,” Rom. 8:1

4.) You Have Not Forgiven Others Who Have harmed you

- It is essential for our Renewal and Recovery that we let go of the pain of past harm and abuse
- Until you are able to release it and forgive it, you will continue to be held as its prisoner
- God’s Word promises in First Peter 5:10-11, “After you have suffered a little while, our God, Who is full of kindness through Christ, will give you His eternal glory. He personally will pick you up, and set you firmly in place and make you stronger than ever”
- You may also need to ask forgiveness for blaming God
- Let God off the hook for what others chose to do to you
- There is God’s will, the devil’s will and your free will at work on the earth

- The harm that was done to us was from the free will of others, not God's will

5.) You Are Afraid of the Risk in Making the Necessary Change

- Some of us put off change, and procrastinate as long as we can
- There may be several reasons for delaying positive change

1.) You may be paralyzed by the fear of failure

- Remember, falling down doesn't make you a failure
- It's staying down that does

2.) You may resist change (growth/renewal) because of the fear of the unknown

- We can all agree that our lives can be "A Mess"
- Working the steps makes it possible for your life to change
- We change all sorts of things, but often don't think about the need to change ourselves
- Isa. 41:10 says, "Fear not, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed...I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will uphold you with My victorious right hand"

- Heb. 13:6 tells us, “We can say without any doubt or fear, ‘The Lord is my Helper and I am not afraid of anything that mere man can do to me’”

6.) You Are Not Willing to “Own” Your Responsibility

- We are not responsible for all the things that have happened to us
- We are responsible for the way we react to them
- In the case of abuse, in NO way is the victim at fault or responsible for the abuse
- Ps. 139:23 says, “Examine me, O God, and know my mind; test me, and discover...if there is any evil in me, and guide me in the everlasting way”
- We increase our ability, stability and responsibility when we increase our accountability to God

7.) You Have Not Developed an Effective Support Team

- Do you have a someone you trust to talk with
- Do you have phone numbers of other support people
- Prov. 13:20 tells us, “Be with wise men and become wise. Be with evil men and become evil”

- Gal. 5:13 says, “Dear brothers, you have been given freedom; not freedom to do wrong, but freedom to love and serve each other”
 - Gal. 6:2 instructs us to “Share each others’ troubles and problems and so obey our Lord’s command”
 - The roots of happiness grow deepest in the soil of service
- One important change that occurs in our journey toward wholeness is that we simply stop being intimidated by the pain that once tormented us
 - Victim behavior ceases
 - Instead, we learn over time to taunt our trauma
 - This means that we boldly face our pain, listen attentively to the voice of Holy Spirit inside of us, and follow the course that God has set before us
 - Inevitably, we won’t run away -- we focus, we pray, we march forward
 - We don’t let anything deter us
 - We buy into the vision the prophet Isaiah shared of a time when God’s people would be so in tune with His will that nature itself would change

In that day the wolf and the lamb will live together; the Leopard will lie down with the baby goat. The calf and The yearling will be safe with the lion, and a little child Will lead them all (Isa. 11:6)

- This passage is powerful good news for those of us who have experienced our share of emotional upheaval
- The radical idea of the predator and the prey lying side by side is not an invitation for us to become our predator's club sandwich
- This is a prophetic declaration that God will change us
- Even if we are surrounded by evil, we will not be consumed or overtaken by it
- We played the role of a panic-driven person whose character ran in circles screaming "help"
- Our transformation gives us a new script
- We walk straight ahead now, with determination and resolve
- When we spot trouble, we slow down and instead say, "What can I do to help?"
- We are able to help ourselves and to help others because we are on the mend

- We are people who have become whole because we have learned the secret
- Trauma is no match for us
- Our trauma is like a snowflake
- As people on the mend, we are like a hot oven
- Without an environment of worry and fear, our trauma falls apart

- When we understand how our trauma works, we can make it fall

apart every time as we do the opposite of what the voice of trauma instructs us to do

- Our trauma has no power over us when we learn to be at peace in the presence of our pain
- We recognize dangerous people and situations, but now we know how to stay out of harm's way
- We choose not to go into a frenzy when challenges cross our paths
- Instead, we have learned to work through and hurdle our difficulties
- We use our past hurts as fertilizer for our growth
- We now have the courage to thrive

- The opposite of being in trauma is thriving
- It is the last stage of transformation
- It begins with the belief that God has intended all along for us to have His best
- This doesn't mean that we won't have trials -- quite the contrary
- But, when we align all of the resources in our Father's hands that He imparts to us against the travail we experience on earth, we have more than enough resources to cope
- We thrive -- our cup is overflowing
- Our emotional distress has been a thief
- The Bible tells us, "The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy," John 10:10
- How much sleep has our pain stolen from us
- How many opportunities have we lost because we were zoning out rather than tuning in
- How many relationships have been ripped apart because we were reacting to past wounds
- Yet Jesus is saying that despite the influence of hardship, which none of us can escape, He is on the scene to usher in life in all of its fullness

- We know that we are thriving when we handle our life challenges much differently than we did before
 - Our thriving is the after shot, and in it we make a strategic shift from fear to love
 - The heart of emotional trauma is living in fear and overreacting to most demands
 - When we are thriving, we handle our disappointments differently
 - We learn to overpower our challenges with the love of God that is inside of us
 - His love fills us with a vision of how our difficulties are being used by Him to strengthen our character and empower us to help others who are suffering from similar pain
-
- Before we knew how trauma worked, it “worked us over”
 - When we consistently do the opposite of what that inner voice of panic directs us to do, we get much better
 - We thrive
 - We know that we are thriving when we just get tired of being overwhelmed by our hurts
 - We experience hurts, but we don’t let them have the final word anymore
 - God’s strength inside us has the final word

- Our trauma has been a time of war for us, but as we develop the courage to thrive, in the ageless words of the eloquent prophet Isaiah, all the nations “Will hammer their swords into plowing shares and their spears into pruning hooks”
- We can overcome the turmoil in our lives
- When we thrive, our healing mushrooms
- We are not perfect, but who wants that burden
- We are able to make a difference in the world around us
- We gratefully enjoy the life God has given us
- We relax more
- We smile more
- We are more confident
- We don’t allow setbacks to cripple us
- We embrace opportunities to grow

I pray for good fortune in everything you do, and for your good health – that your everyday affairs prosper, as well as your soul! (3 John 2-3 Message)

I pray the participation in and sharing of you faith may produce and promote full recognition and appreciation and

understanding and precise knowledge of every good thing that is ours in our identification with Christ Jesus and unto His eternal glory. (Philem. 6 AMP)

I pray to God – my life a prayer – and wait for what He'll say and do. For if God kept records of wrongdoings, who would stand a chance? As it turns out, forgiveness is His habit, and that's why He's worshiped. My life's on the line before God, my Lord, waiting and watching till morning.

Oh that people would wait and watch for God – with His arrival comes love, with God's arrival comes generous redemption. No doubt about it – He'll redeem Israel, buy back Israel from captivity to sin. (Psalm 130:3-8 Message)

LET EVERYTHING THAT HAS BREATH

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7lvyd1JdQU>

Let ev'rything that, ev'rything that
Ev'rything that has breath praise the Lord
Let ev'rything that, ev'rything that
Ev'rything that has breath praise the Lord

Praise You in the morning, praise You in the evening
Praise You when I'm young and when I'm old
Praise You when I'm laughing, praise You when I'm grieving
Praise You ev'ry season of the soul

If we could see how much You're worth
Your power, Your might, Your endless love
Then surely we would never cease to praise

Praise You in the heavens, joining with the angels
Praising You forever and a day

Praise You on the earth now, joining with creation
Calling all the nations to Your praise

If we could see how much You're worth
Your power, Your might, Your endless love
Then surely we would never cease to praise

Let ev'rything that, ev'rything that
Ev'rything that has breath praise the Lord
Let ev'rything that, ev'rything that
Ev'rything that has breath praise the Lord

Song by Matt Redman